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## The Uncrowned King

Janne Clara Lindrum  
*University of Wollongong*

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# *The Uncrowned King*

Janne Clara Lindrum ATCL, BA (Hons) First Class

A dissertation and accompanying manuscript to fulfill the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Creative Arts in the University of Wollongong, Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts.

Year of submission: 2015

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2015

*The Uncrowned King*

## Certification

I, Janne Clara Lindrum declare that this submission in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of the Creative Arts, Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualification at any other academic institution.

Janne Clara Lindrum

Dated:

# Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the tremendous assistance I have received during my candidature for this degree and the generous support and encouragement provided by the Faculty of Law, Humanities, and the Arts at the University of Wollongong.

My thanks especially go to my supervisors, Dr. Siobhan McHugh and Professor Cathy Cole, who opened my mind to a world of new ideas. You are my heroes and I am deeply grateful for your inspiration, patience, competent direction and, above all else, belief in my capabilities. We set sail on this journey in a tiny boat with a compass. We returned with boat intact towing an incredible booty.

Next I thank the wonderful people who have helped and supported me through this journey, including:- Professor Gerry Turcotte who encouraged me to pick up my pen to write creatively; Professor Edward J. Blakely, who critiqued my thesis proposal and read and commented on an early draft of my manuscript; Robert Lynden-Bell, who read and commented on an early draft of my manuscript and dissertation; Jane Marton, who read aloud an early draft of my manuscript so I could hear how it was reading; Robyn Richardson, who provided insights into the evolution of cue sports post my father's death and provided an introduction to distinguished journalist Les Wheeler; Les Wheeler, who kindly provided an oral interview, statement in support, cards and a photograph of my father shaking hands with British champion Joe Davis prior to the world professional snooker championship final in 1946 and shared beautiful memories of playing billiards with my father; Matthew Kitchen, for pointing me towards a photo of my father presenting a trophy to the Armed Services during World War II; Australian boxing champion Tommy Burns, for sending me a note on his friendship with my father; Neil McCormack, for

introducing me to the life story of Australia's first literary treasure, Charlotte Atkinson; Chloe Higgins, for suggesting University of Wollongong; Dr. Georgine Clarsen – my first point of contact at the University of Wollongong – who told me to 'Leave history to the historians. Go write the story. I can't wait to read it'; Librarians at the Mitchell, State and National libraries, University of Sydney library, University of Notre Dame library and University of Wollongong library; and the late Bryce Courtenay, whose lecture on storytelling at the National Library in Canberra in 2011 inspired me and whose subsequent encouragement helped to foster my early storytelling instincts.

Last but by no means least, I thank my remarkable mother, Joy Lindrum, whose acts of preservation formed the basis of this work, and my immediate family, principally my husband, Robert Yandell, whose love and faith in me has kept me going through what has been a very personal, emotional and sometimes painful journey. Did I find the self along the way? I certainly found *The Uncrowned King*.

## Dedication

During an Ethics tutorial during the second year of my undergraduate studies, there was a rather heated debate on abortion. I remember sitting in the room thinking to myself, a great champion would not have been born if my grandmother had elected to abort her son (who had been conceived via her rape) and neither would I. Therefore, I dedicate *The Uncrowned King* to my grandmother Clara (Violet) Lindrum, my father – her son, Horace – and to my mother whose tireless efforts in preserving Lindrum record made this story possible.

# Abstract

I am the eldest daughter of world professional snooker and Australian professional billiards and snooker champion Horace Lindrum. During his fifty-year sporting career, Horace Lindrum was continuously in the spotlight. I argue, since my father's death in 1974, his life and achievements have been misrepresented. This dissertation, which is a creative and critical exploration of Horace Lindrum's sporting achievements in the field of billiards and snooker, aims to restore his reputation as one of Australia's most significant sporting pioneers. The project also examines the ways in which nations tell stories by highlighting the vexed treatment of family stories within wider national narratives.

Part One, *The Uncrowned King*, is a family memoir which captures the essence of Horace Lindrum's life and sporting achievements. As the author and Horace Lindrum's daughter, I balance the responsibilities between historian, memoirist and family member, positing as I do so the question: How can an author remove herself from behind a father's shadow?

Part Two, the exegesis, *Family, Nation, Sport: Writing The Uncrowned King*, explores the ways in which biography, family history and sport connect in wider national discourse. It aims to contextualise Horace Lindrum's achievements within broader social and political currents. In the exegesis I also examine the challenges of writing a family memoir.

# *THE UNCROWNED KING*

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Chapter One      In the footsteps of the Other

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## Prologue

A 1998 article in the *Australian Financial Review* reported: 'Billiard Legend inspires theme for new chain. Mr. David Marriner will launch a chain of boutique hotels and resorts around the country named after world champion Australian billiards legend Walter Lindrum...the Lindrum hotel chain will incorporate six to eight hotels and eco tourism lodges.'<sup>1</sup> The media release, one of several releases issued by a private company,<sup>2</sup> related specifically to the proposed redevelopment of the News Limited building located at 26 Flinders Street at the corner of Spring Street opposite the Melbourne Cricket Ground. My mother and I were taken aback that someone would try to use the Lindrum family name and history on a commercial development without consultation and consent of the family and we were concerned about what appeared to be an attempt to sever links in a family chain. I was and remain the registered owner of intellectual property protecting the Lindrum name. The only trademark I had not yet registered was the hotel mark. The developer had lodged an application to IP Australia for the trademark in the hotel class. I tried to contact the developer but he refused to speak with me.

The original Lindrum's billiard room in Melbourne (1921-1973) was located in Flinders Lane and closed prior to my father's death in 1974 due to demolition of the premises. At my father's funeral wake my second cousin Irene (Dolly) May Ellis nee Dunn<sup>3</sup> requested permission to use the Lindrum name to re-establish a Lindrum billiard room because her husband, a ship's

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Cave, 'Hotels take their Cue: Billiard Legend inspires theme for new chain', *Australian Financial Review*, January 14, 1998, 21.

Kylie Hanson, 'Lindrum Hotel Ball Roll', the *Herald Sun*, January 14, 1998, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Staged Developments Pty. Limited. Directors David and Elaine Marriner. This company subsequently changed its name to Australian Super Developments Pty. Limited.

<sup>3</sup> Irene May Dunn changed her name by Deed Poll from Dunn to Lindrum in 1966.

engineer, was drinking heavily and she wanted to get him off the ships. My mother gave her consent. Dolly ran Lindrum's in the News Limited building for about nine years and News Limited journalists were regular customers. The business had closed prior to the media announcement about the proposed new 'Lindrum Hotel'.

My mother, my eldest son, then a twenty-three-year-old law student, and myself instituted proceedings against the developer in the Federal Court of Australia under Section 52 of the Trade Practices Act alleging false and misleading conduct in that the general public would form the view that the family owned and/or had endorsed the hotel.

After instituting proceedings, I returned home one afternoon with my two youngest children to find the message light flashing on the telephone answering machine. The message, from a person unknown: 'Miss Lindrum, we have a special for you. Just for the month of August, we can sever your right arm and then your left, painlessly and soundlessly, for only \$500.' A few days later, a second message offered to sever my legs for the same price. I appreciate that this might sound like a crime novel, but it actually happened. These messages were directed to the Federal Police in Melbourne for investigation, to no avail. Following further threats to my broader family, I reluctantly settled the matter.

In 2008, the hotel was sold. The new owner has continued to trade as the 'Lindrum Hotel' and to promote the story of just one member of the Lindrum family, namely my great-uncle Walter Lindrum. My father, another international billiards and snooker champion, and other prominent players in the family, have been omitted from the record of this establishment, which exploits the Lindrum name, but has not even consulted with the Lindrum family. Indeed, because of our stand against this hotel development, I believe my father's side of the family has been shunned by the Melbourne establishment and by sections of Australia's sporting echelons.

For instance, in 1998, the Echo Foundation in Melbourne announced a memorial dinner at the Melbourne Tennis Club to celebrate my great-uncle Walter's centenary. I sent a cheque for \$2,200 so that our family could attend the dinner. The cheque was returned with a letter saying the dinner had been cancelled. That was untrue. Prime Minister Hawke, prominent radio commentator Alan Jones and Australian champion snooker player, Eddie Charlton, attended the dinner. Subsequently, several attempts have been made by me to correct misrepresentations in relation to the Lindrum family history. Promises have been received from curators at the Melbourne Cricket Club / National Sports Museum to 'pull up the file', but nothing happens. A request to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* to amend the entry on the Lindrums by correcting errors and including Horace Lindrum in his own right were met with 'show us your evidence.'

On March 10, 2008, Melbourne-based domain reporter Marc Pallisco reported:

The former billiard centre – built by the family of world famous billiard champion Walter Lindrum in the 1920's [which, is incorrect, the Lindrum family never built a billiard room. The building which is the subject of this article was owned by News Limited] – later reincarnated into offices, and then a boutique hotel – will be sold next month – in a deal expected to cost owner CBus around \$20 million. Now branded Hotel Lindrum the 5-level brick building at 26 Flinders Street, near the corner of Spring Street, was built at the peak of Lindrum's multi-award winning career, as a lounge bar [again, this is incorrect]. In about 1960 the building was used as offices and in the late 1990s, converted into a boutique hotel with 59 luxury hotel suites, ground floor bar and restaurant – and a billiard room. Fund manager and developer CBus inherited the Hotel Lindrum after it split with business partner, private investor David Marriner in 1999.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Marc Pallisco, Property Reporter for *Fairfax Property Domain* in [www.realestatesource.com.au/hotel-lindrum-to-be-sold.html](http://www.realestatesource.com.au/hotel-lindrum-to-be-sold.html)

I believe the most likely cause for the split with David Marriner was a direct consequence of the proceedings but, at the time of the sale of the property in 2008, Staged Developments Pty. Limited were still the registered owner of the Lindrum hotel trademark. An application to IP Australia claiming common law rights to the trademark lodged by CBus was withdrawn after CBus received a letter from me requesting the return of the trademark in accord with the settlement Deed. Thereafter, Staged Developments Pty. Limited changed its name to Australian Super Developments Pty. Limited and Australian Super Developments Pty. Limited became a member of CBus for the first time.

This memoir, and accompanying dissertation, are a daughter's attempt to recalibrate representations of one chapter of Australian sporting history.

## Chapter One

### In the footsteps of the Other

The Lindrums were a family of champions, mainly in billiards, but also in primary industry and entertainment. Winemaking, Dixieland jazz, percussion and the Big Wheel. My great-great-grandfather Friedrich Wilhelm Von Lindrum was born in Stralsund<sup>5</sup>, Prussia, in 1828. He came to Australia in 1849 as a passenger aboard the 360 ton sailing vessel *Prinzessin Luise* (The *Princess Louise*); a ship chartered by the South Australian Colonisation Society. On the passenger list he is described as Mr. Lindnum.

Carrying one hundred and sixty-two passengers – men, women and children – a mixture of revolutionaries, intellectuals, artists and engineers – the *Princess Louise* is said to be one of the most important vessels to have arrived in Australia as the men and women aboard left an indelible mark on the history and culture of the nation.

Passengers included botanist Marianne Von Kreusler, journalist Otto Schomburgk – Schomburgk founded the German newspaper *Sud-Australische Zeitung* – botanist, author and second director of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Richard Schomburgk, artist Alex Schramm, brass founder and winemaker Friedrich Adolph Buhring, music master Gustav Louis Esselbach, pastor Carl Ludwig Mucke – Mucke set up the school education system in South Australia – and composer Carl Linger who wrote “Song of Australia.”<sup>6</sup> The nine-month journey via Rio de Janeiro was largely uneventful save for the birth of a son to the Lingers.

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<sup>5</sup> Situate in northeast Germany in the region of western Pomerania in the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. A sea-side city, Stralsund was founded in 1234 and was one of the most prospering members of the medieval Hanseatic League. The city is know for its magnificent red-brick Gothic architecture of which, the most extraordinary landmark is the Gothic City Hall.

<sup>6</sup> First sung on December 12, 1859, “Song of Australia” was published by W. H. Paling & Co. in 1879.

One can only hazard a guess as to why my great-great-grandfather fled his homeland. Poverty, hunger, the onset of the machine age, fear of the wild, undisciplined mobs and growing fascination with the French Revolution which saw angry farmers don Phrygian<sup>7</sup> hats, swap scythes for weapons and flood into cities chanting: 'Freedom, Liberty, Fraternity'. All possibilities. Alternatively, he may simply have been a young man with a fearless and adventurous spirit.

What is particularly interesting is the fact that in 1848 three-year-conscription into the Royal Prussian Army was compulsory yet the Prussian government was happy for this select group of young men to escape their obligation. Perhaps the monarchy – foreseeing the great wave of revolution that was about to hit Europe – sought to preserve the lives of wealthy and/or gifted citizens and believed the men and women aboard this ship capable of establishing a Prussian colony in the great South Land.

Taking into account the 'Von' in my great-great-grandfather's surname and the successive naming of children within the Lindrum family – Friedrich Wilhelm Von Lindrum I, Frederick William Lindrum II, Frederick William Lindrum III, Frederick William Lindrum IV – it is highly probable the Lindrum family had military, even royal connections and were supporters of Kaiser Wilhelm as well as the British monarchy.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A soft, brimless, conical cap associated in antiquity with the inhabitants of Phrygia, a region south of central Anatolia. The cap features in Homer's *Ulysses* and is associated with the mythical twins, Castor and Pollux, patron gods of horses and the Roman social order of mounted knights called *equites* who appear in a number of Greek and Roman myths. Dubbed France's bonnet rouge, The Phrygian cap was worn by revolutionaries when storming the Bastille.

<sup>8</sup> It is interesting to note Queen Victoria ordered a billiard table installed at Windsor Castle in 1845 and billiard table builders, Orme & Sons of 16 Soho Square, London, The Parsonage, Manchester and 69 West Nile Street, Glasgow, manufactured 'By Special Appointment to His Majesty King Edward VII'.

This supposition is based on Friedrich's superlative skill at the billiard table, his position within the Masonic Temple<sup>9</sup> which saw him lead the Freemasons into the South Australian Parliament during the visit of Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, (later Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha in 1866), the award to him of Australia's first international gold medal for South Australian Shiraz<sup>10</sup> and the fact that the Prussian Minister of Customs was godparent at his christening.

Shortly after his arrival in Australia, Friedrich was granted a crown lease over lands at the corner of Thomas and Edsall Streets in Norwood where he established a vineyard estate. In 1861 he was granted citizenship. His Naturalisation Certificate lists his occupation as wine merchant. The following year he married Clara Wolff, the nineteen-year-old daughter of a cabinetmaker. There were three children of the marriage, Frederick William II, Clara and Lavinia. Lavinia died of whooping cough within the first twelve months. Clara grew up and married John Cawardine and there were two daughters of the marriage, Alethea Ruby and Gwendoline Beavan. The daughters died without progeny. Clara Cawardine and her daughters are buried in my great-great-grandfather's grave in the West Terrace cemetery in Adelaide. Originally Common Ground Road, path 36, allotment 22 east, now road 5, pathway 4, 2E, number 2225.

Fame at the billiard table can be traced to the first professional billiards championship event staged in Australia. Held at the York Hotel in Adelaide in 1865, Friedrich's win against the great British champion John Roberts Senior

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<sup>9</sup> The first Masonic Temple was built in Marseille, France, in 1765. A decade later (1755), the cornerstone was laid for the Freemasons' Hall in London. The Grand Lodge of England was established on the site of the Goose and Gridiron Tavern. The symbol or trademark of the Freemasons is the square and compass with the letter "G" in the centre. Whilst Freemasons follow no specific religion, it is an imperative to believe in a Supreme Being as the 'Grand Geometrician of the Universe' and Freemasonry is a way of life rooted in morality.

<sup>10</sup> This award was presented to Friedrich in 1873 at the inaugural celebrations of the London Wine Society held at the Victoria & Albert Hall by the President of the Society, Prince Albert Edward, later King Edward VII. The following year Friedrich was invited as a Brandy Judge at the Paris Exhibition (1874). Friedrich returned to Australia as a passenger aboard the *Lusitania*.

generated great excitement and triggered a trade boom in the export of award-winning billiard tables. Crafted from the finest Australian timbers, the tables were covered with five yards of finely spun merino wool. Big match-play followed. Then, on January 31, 1885, John Roberts and Field Marshal Horatio Herbert Lord Kitchener; Kitchener was a graduate of the Royal Military Academy who won fame in military campaigns in Egypt, Khartoum and the Sudan; together, established a governing body to oversee the rules of the sports of billiards and snooker. This body was the British Billiards Association & Control Council.

Friedrich's win against Roberts also signalled the Lindrum legend. Five world-class champions in the same discipline in only four generations. My father was the last of this great line.

Hailed as a national hero for his billiard table and winemaking successes, Friedrich passed away on Anniversary day, January 26, 1880.<sup>11</sup> Seven hundred men, in respectful silence, mourned his passing and remembered his accomplishments for Australia and Adelaide as they marched behind the casket to the railway station where they formed a guard of honour to say their last farewells. On arrival in Adelaide an elected body of pallbearers lifted the casket into a horse-drawn, glass-fronted hearse which then lumbered over cobblestoned streets to the mournful toll of church bells and the beat of a solitary drum as it made its way to Friedrich's final resting place.

Waiting at the graveside, a small boy, not yet fifteen, yet this small boy – my great-grandfather Frederick II – had learned enough billiards from his father to leave men and women gasping as he waltzed around a billiard table. Six years later his love affair with one of the maids in his mother's household caused a family rift which would never be healed. Harriet Atkins wasn't pregnant but she came with a two-year old daughter, Florence Lilian born December 1, 1884.

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<sup>11</sup> Now known as Australia Day.

Clara Wolff had been raised a staunch Lutheran and brought up to believe that a woman conceiving a child out of wedlock was morally wrong and socially unacceptable so she withheld her consent, an act which led to a furious row with her son that sent the servants flying for cover.

‘Your life will amount to nothing’ she told him.

He responded by storming out of the house and slamming the door behind him.

The wedding took place thirteen days after Frederick’s twenty-first birthday (1886), his mother’s consent being no longer required as a matter of law. A few days after the marriage, great-grandfather, his wife and daughter left South Australia, spending the next ten years criss-crossing the nation in a horse and cart with a billiard cue strapped to the back. Tragedy! The best billiardist in the world roaming the Australian countryside scavenging for a crust. But it wasn’t all bad news. Lady Luck dealt a few good cards. His win against Harry Gray was an ace. The following enthusiastic report of the event was found buried in an early scrapbook:

May 6, 1887.

The Athenaeum Hall, Melbourne

Australia has a new champion

Lindrum defeats Harry Gray

Last night at the Athenaeum Hall our Pioneer of the Long Red was no match for his opponent. Frederick William Lindrum II dealt him a knock-out. Boy, oh boy, what a spectacle! There are all sorts of adjectives I would pluck to describe the incredible display but none seem as appropriate as extraordinary.

Our thanks must go to King of the Ring Smokin’ Joe Thompson for promoting what was surely the most stunning piece of theatre we have seen at

the Athenaeum for a very long time. If I could find fault with anything it would have to be Joe's cabbage tree hat.

Joe, what on earth possessed you to put that silly thing on your head? It looked ridiculous mate. Poor Billy Winter! (Billy Winter was the Referee). Billy had a tough time keeping a straight face. He told me after the show, if you wear that ruddy hat next time he'll get his cricket bat and whack the bloody thing for a six.

Hell or high water, great-grandfather was determined to prove his mother wrong. The win against Gray was a good start but he fell on his financial feet in Western Australia, earning enough money to return to Victoria where, in 1921, he established Lindrum's billiard room in Flinders Lane. What happened to Lindrum's? For the present let's just say what started as a commercial enterprise ended up a shrine to a family whose name became synonymous with the games of the green cloth.

The success of the business was largely attributable to great-grandfather's ability to pass the billiards art down the line. Firstly there was my great-uncle Frederick III. Australians dubbed him 'The Great White Hope'. We knew him as 'The Perfectionist'. Next there was my great-uncle Walter. He was known as 'The Man of Figures' because of his mathematical scoring ability. And then there was my father Horace 'The Showman'. Dark-haired, barely 5 feet and 4 inches in height and very handsome, he was a favourite with the crowd wherever he went. My father might be seen as the most important and influential of these men.

As the chairman of the Indian Billiards Association M. M. Begg said:

Horace probably did more than any other player to raise the sports of billiards and snooker to new heights of popularity as much by the magic of his genius as by the charm of his personality.

A great champion, his modesty was invincible. With the charm of his manners he combined his greatness as a player and made himself one of the most authentic champions. It has often been said there are

no “born” billiards and snooker players. Only those who worked hard got where they are. To some extent this was true of Horace Lindrum but, if ever a man was born with genius for snooker, he was that man.’<sup>12</sup>

Over a career spanning an incredible 50 years, Horace was at the forefront of his profession as a world professional snooker player. The subject of intense media coverage in an era when technologies were nowhere near as sophisticated as they are today, he was frequently featured on the front pages of newspapers across the globe and almost continuously in the spotlight.

Overseeing this remarkable progeny was ‘The Ringmaster extraordinaire.’<sup>13</sup> In the photo below, the Ringmaster is second in from the right-hand side. Eyes fixed, his arms are clenched firmly behind his back.



The Perfectionist is on the far right. He’s the one with the smile.

The Man of Figures is second from the left.

Shoulders forward, there is a certain arrogance in the stance.

The Showman is far left. He is quite clearly the kid.

Shared characteristics – fine, high foreheads – large ears.

Genii, they were the personification of billiards perfection.

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<sup>12</sup> These words belong to M. M. Begg, Chairman of the Indian Billiards Association and were published in the 1952 Souvenir Program commemorating Horace Lindrum’s official visit in his capacity as world professional snooker champion.

<sup>13</sup> My great-grandfather, Frederick William Lindrum II.

Three personalities central to my story are missing from this photograph. My grandmother Clara Violet Lindrum ‘the Entertainer’, my mother – Joy – ‘the Black Poker’<sup>14</sup> – and my great-grandmother Harriet-the-hard-as-hails. With one eye on the till and the other on the stocks and shares section of the newspaper, Harriet knew how to turn a dollar. Between them this fascinating family created a unique piece of history sending newspapers flying off news stands for over a century.

### Melbourne 1921

Located down a narrow lane and curried in amongst the vibrant Jewish rag, tag and bobtail operations<sup>15</sup> – ‘The House of Lazar Slutzkin’ – probably the first Jewish clothing manufacturer in Melbourne – sat at its heart. So, too, did solidarity for Slutzkin shared his knowledge and skill with all newcomers and, through boom and bust, the Lane flourished on the Slutzkin principle: Love Thy Neighbour.

I stop to imagine the old days when the Lane was the meat and wine of the Australian fashion industry. I see the tailor Mendel, a tape measure buried in the thick folds of flesh around his neck. He is greeting the machinists. ‘Shah-lolhm. Mah hah-in-yah-neem.’<sup>16</sup> No material today. Today is Friday. There will be the usual morning and afternoon prayers then the machines will be covered and the material stored with the multi-coloured pin-cushions, cotton reels, cutting scissors, thimbles, buttons, braids and all the other paraphernalia and all will ready for Shabbat. It takes time to make the Challah<sup>17</sup> and the Chicken

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<sup>14</sup> My mother was dubbed ‘The Black Poker’ by British Lord David Quibell because of her incredible marketing skills and undying enthusiasm for the games of the green cloth.

<sup>15</sup> Jewish peoples ran clothing manufacturing industries ‘the rag trade’ from Flinders Lane.

<sup>16</sup> Hello/ good morning. How are things?

<sup>17</sup> Jewish egg bread that is carefully plaited. Other wonderful Jewish foods enjoyed at Shabbat include freshwater fish, meats, horseradish source.

Turkey soup, set the table, light the candles. One mustn't be too tired from the day to concentrate on the most important part of the week.

Henry Haskin (winner Melbourne Gown of the Year two years running), Charlotte of Fifth Avenue, Cherry Lane, Hartnell, Saba, Lindrum's – they were all of them born of Flinders Lane.<sup>18</sup>

Lindrum's was a billiard room like no other, before or since. The only billiard room that matched Lindrum's of Flinders Lane was its sister, Lindrum's of Pitt Street, Sydney. That's because Lindrum's of Pitt Street, Sydney was built on the same business model. Wholesome and elegant service. Starched aprons and caps. No gum, no hard liquor, no smoking, no swearing, no spitting, no pickpockets, no prostitutes, no gambling men. The ideology upon which the Lindrum billiard room was founded was a borrowed creed. One that British/American entrepreneur Fred Harvey made famous on the Atchison Topeka & the Santa Fe. Harvey's lunch rooms were the first restaurant chain in America.

Great-grandfather thought Harvey was a genius. He sold the dream based upon the images of the little house on the prairie, white picket fence with a pretty girl at the gate and a delicious dinner bubbling away on the stove. The Harvey girl didn't quite mirror Shakespeare's Rosalind (Rosalind from *As You Like It* being Shakespeare's bees knees<sup>19</sup>) but – in her little black dress and Elsie collar – she came bloody close.

Today, the Harveys and the Lindrum's, along with Mrs. Hordern's Leghorn hat<sup>20</sup> and Keith and John's Gainsborough House<sup>21</sup>, are nothing more

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<sup>18</sup> Today Chanel has a flagship store at the "Paris end" of the Lane.

<sup>19</sup> A term for 'ideal woman'.

<sup>20</sup> Italian wheat straw woven into hats. A regular attendee at race meetings, Mrs. Hordern was renowned for her fashionable dress, especially her stylish Leghorn hats.

<sup>21</sup> Fine dining restaurant, Cambridge in the Waikato, 20 kilometres from Hamilton, New Zealand, run by my dear friend Keith McDonnell and his long-time partner, John, Hospitality was paramount. Today the establishment is a bed/breakfast.

than a glorious memory of Bombe Alaska and Blue Nun.<sup>22</sup> Yet, when I walk down Flinders Lane or stroll down Pitt Street, I can still hear the click, click, click of the billiard balls and the roar of the waiting crowd.

Contemplating my family's past in this way I wonder why I have chosen to write their story? Am I up to the task? Can I do it? Even as we speak I feel my skin burning like crackling on a pig that's been roasted for too many hours in an overheated oven. Many a time I've thought of giving up the ghost, of having a party and heaping the whole bloody lot on a bonfire but the history clings to my flesh and I am haunted by a vision of great souls riding around and around on a carousel. Music. Bright lights. Painted horses. Heady days.

Wherever I look the ghosts are there.  
Wherever I go, the ghosts go with me.

Before I embark on my journey into Lindrums' world, I pay homage to the unsung heroes – those who stand largely in the shadows of this story – the journalists, publishers, editors, cartoonists, cameramen, interviewers, filmmakers, scholars, friends and fans – without whose contribution this labour of love – this opportunity to 'bind the past and the future'<sup>23</sup> – would not have been possible.

I touch my father's cue case. I run my fingers across the plaque on the front. I open the case. I lift the cue nestling inside. I hold the cue high above my head as one holds up an Olympic torch. A torch to the men and women dripping in talent who captured the evolution of my family story with great headlines like:

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<sup>22</sup> German wine brand launched by H. Sichel Sohne (Mainz) in 1923 with 1921 vintage.

<sup>23</sup> Australian sculptress Linda Klarfeld (1976–) whose bronze and granite works of art focus on the human figure. (Hunter Valley Gardens – a grandmother plays with her grandchildren – emphasising the reality that every link in the chain of the human family is important to the whole).

‘Lindrum brothers seesaw during week’s play’  
‘Mussolini of billiards holds pistol to their heads’  
‘Here comes the next Lindrum...Horace’s star in the ascendancy’

Headlines like these turned the Lindrum billiard rooms into iconic landmarks and catapulted the Lindrum name into households, initially across the country and, later, across the globe.

My family story – at least this rendering of the story – starts the day my great-great-grandfather strides up the gangplank of the *Princess Louise* but takes flight the day his son opens the door to Lindrum’s in Flinders Lane.

In 1921 Melbourne was not the sophisticated metropolis it is today. Largely populated by ordinary Joes who couldn’t afford to buy themselves a vanilla slice, the little municipality was a somewhat divided space. On the south side of the Yarra, known back then as Smellbourne, were pubs, brothels, boot factories and betting shops. On the north side, a sprinkling of dramatic, federation-styled mansions, clubs – including the Melbourne Cricket Club, Victorian Racing Club and the Tattersalls Club – and theatres, including the Velodrome and the Athenaeum (the Australian equivalent of Laura Henderson’s Old Windmill Theatre in London, famous for its nude tableaux vivants<sup>24</sup>).

Maximilian Ludwig Kreitmayer’s waxworks museum was also located in the theatre district. The waxworks came to be known as a Gallery of Reference for displaying sexual organs decayed by venereal disease and the head of bushranger, Joe Byrne.

Sandwiched in between these establishments were bookshops, shooting galleries, Parliament House, Old Melbourne Gaol (where they hanged Ned Kelly), the Russell Street police station, barristers’ chambers, the Supreme Court

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<sup>24</sup> Nude living pictures that created quite a sensation.

(where His Honour Mr. Justice Redmond Barry conspired with a Victorian Premier to deprive poor Ned of a fair trial), St. Paul's Cathedral, the Princes Bridge and Flinders Street Station.

Big-named celebrities graced the Opera House stage, including Hungarian-American illusionist and magician Ehrich Weiss 'Ehrie' known as Houdini and comedienne and juggler William Claude Dukenfield known as W. C. Fields. But times were tough. Depression, brutal. Gone were the days when you could walk in off the street and get the bank manager's nod for a 'Variety' store <sup>25</sup> in Collingwood so the idea of opening a billiard room in the 'lane' was a hot topic at the pub.

Critics at the Duke of Wellington were divided. Some thought my great-grandfather was as mad as a cut snake. Others thought he was an Einstein. The debate attracted wide-scale media attention but the story of the room was not the first Lindrum story. The Lindrums were already a household name. Newspaper moguls James Joynton-Smith and Robert Clyde Packer had been championing the Lindrum brand for some time and had a vested interest in ensuring the name remained at the forefront of sport.

Joint proprietors of '*The Sporting Referee*', the leading sporting newspaper in Australia, Smith & Packer's interests extended beyond the boundaries of the paper. Packer had a passion for polo and Smith, a passion for delivering impromptu performances of "Down at the Old Bull and Bush"<sup>26</sup> to the accompaniment of the concertina he carried with him everywhere he went. He could also do quite a few rounds in the boxing ring and, at his wife's beckoning, had worked hard to make race-tracks more 'lady friendly'. The

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<sup>25</sup> Sir George James Coles, CBE (1885-1977), founder of the Coles supermarket empire. The first store was established in Smith Street, Collingwood, Victoria, opening on April 9, 1914, and promoting in the window: 'Nothing over a shilling'. Prior to the opening of the Coles store Australians purchased their produce from barrow men / women. The Coles store revolutionised the way people shopped.

<sup>26</sup> English Music Hall song composed by Harry von Tilzer around 1905. Lyrics by Andrew B. Sterling, the song was popularised by Florrie Forde.

Packer / Smith partnership sponsored the Wallabies and the Kangaroos and, when they heard tell of a nine-year-old prodigy at the billiard table, the pair set out to see whether what they had heard was true. After seeing my great-uncle Frederick play, a decision was taken to keep a close eye on the boy's progress and, when he won the Australian title<sup>27</sup> from the more seasoned billiardist Charles Memmott, they pulled him into their fold.

When you see my great-uncle's photos it's easy to understand why he was called the Perfectionist. He always took aim nine inches in from the ball, always well down. Linear and straight, the cue between the two eyes created a harmonious union between cue and cueist. The bridge arm seems unyielding and there is a certain amount of weight on the bridge occasioned by throwing the body forward. Pressure on the bridge hand ensures its steadiness. This weight is borne by the thumb and tips of the fingers. Stance denotes perfect balance. Knees bent. Left foot in a perfectly straight line six inches in advance of the right. Right foot turned slightly to the right. The measurement between the two feet precisely twelve inches.

Frederick won the Australian title for the first time in 1904, the same year my great-grandfather became a bookmaker<sup>28</sup> for the Western Australian branch of Tattersalls, an exclusive club network established to provide a social outlet for 'gentlemen only', and where gentlemen could gamble on the races.

During Australia's blackest decade – 1893-1913 – gambling was a means of survival – some authors go as far as to say it was a matter of life and death – and meat tray lotteries and chocolate wheels were used to encourage the practice.

By 1913 the seeds of a mature sporting culture had been planted and gambling was beginning to play a powerful role in Australian society. It was

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<sup>27</sup> Frederick William Lindrum III won the Australian professional billiards title in 1908, when he defeated the renowned Charlie Memmott. Frederick III retained the Australian professional billiards title for twenty-seven years.

<sup>28</sup> Bookmaking was perceived to be a mathematical way of making a living.

during this period my great-uncle Frederick's star was in the ascendancy and, not only did the Australian public get behind him, they pinned all their hopes on his ability to win the world title.

'The Great White Hope is off to London to take on the Brits.'

But Dame Fortune didn't deal him an Ace.

'What went wrong, Mr. Lindrum?' a journalist asked after his defeat.

'I'm sorry. That's all I am going to say. I'm sorry I let Australia down.'

According to family legend the Perfectionist collapsed in Trafalgar Square. On hearing the news, the Ringmaster ran into the street and hailed a Hackney Carriage to take him to Charing Cross Hospital in Fulham Palace Road.

'I'm looking for my son,' he told the woman sitting at the reception desk. 'Ah, here he is. Ward number 10.'

Seconds later: 'Frederick, get up. I didn't come ten thousand miles for nothing. Did you hear me? I said, Get up!' The Ringmaster stormed across the room.

The Perfectionist looked up from his pillow. He knew instinctively it was his father coming towards him.

'Did you hear me, son? I didn't come ten thousand miles for nothing.'

The Perfectionist rolled over.

'Get up, Frederick. You're coming with me.'

The Ringmaster ripped back the cover.

For the first time in his life he didn't think he could do his father's bidding.

'Excuse me, Sir, what on earth do you think you're doing?' The voice belonged to a young nurse tending a patient on the far side of the room.

The Ringmaster told her to mind her own business.

'He is my business. Your son has pneumonia.'

'I don't care what he's got, he's coming with me.'

The nurse scampered off to get help but the Perfectionist was already in a cab on the way to his Waterloo.

British champion, Willie Smith of Darlington, was waiting patiently in the reception rooms. He wasn't waiting for the Perfectionist to walk through the door. That's the last thing he expected to happen. He was sitting upright in a high-winged blue leather chair waiting for formal notification of the cancellation of the match.

Whilst the media attack about this incident was savage, it was nothing compared to the siege from within. Great-grandfather wanted the world cup on the wall at Lindrum's and he was prepared to do just about anything to that end, including weight his eldest son as men weight horses. The Perfectionist worked hard to meet his father's expectations by recording some phenomenal world record breaks then, out-of-the-blue and without consultation, he took a public stand against the slaughter of elephants for billiard balls. The Ringmaster and media resumed their attack. 'If it's okay for President Roosevelt, it ought to be okay for the Australian champion' one newspaper reported. Cartoonist, Tom Webster, jumped to Frederick's defence with a cartoon depicting half a dozen elephants dancing to the song "For he is a jolly good fellow".

Various dramas unfolded in the Lindrum household during the next decade and a half (1913-1928). More drama in fifteen years than most families experience in a lifetime. It all began the day the Royal Australian naval fleet steamed through Sydney Heads:

Since Captain Cook's arrival, no more memorable event has happened than the advent of the Australian fleet. The former event announced the birth of Australia. The latter event announces its' coming of age.

Minister for Defence  
Senator Edward Millen

To entertain the officers and men Frederick and Walter went head to head for the Australian professional billiards title. Frederick emerged the victor.

A year later, while Australians pledged their loyalty to the Mother country, the Lindrum brothers battled for the title before the troops sailed for the Dardenelles. Again, Frederick emerged the victor. My great-uncle Walter wanted to be the Australian champion. He threw a real tantrum when he lost the second time and then flatly refused to have another crack. He told the press the Australian title was not important to him. The reality is, he liked to be in control of the game, he didn't like losing in front of the navy men and he didn't want to risk losing a third time around.

When the war was over, the Ringmaster sold the Classic billiard room on George Street in Sydney and the family moved to Melbourne.

Smith and Packer weren't happy about the Ringmaster's move to Melbourne and they had every right to be upset. They'd made a significant investment in Lindrum's billiard room at the Classic on George Street and in building the Lindrum brand and they had a sneaking suspicion the Ringmaster was now planning to move in on their turf.

A war of words ensued. Nobody knew when it would end nor did they know who would emerge the victor. The Ringmaster got the publicity he wanted for his youngest and Smith & Packer got a terrific return on their investment. So it might be argued that both sides were winners. You see, the Lindrum story was not the story of a single champion, it was an epic, a saga, a legend with more angles than those to be found in E. White's famous *Treatise on the game of billiards*. A reporter by the name of Jack Oake covered many of those angles. In his memoir he said interviews with my great-grandfather included some of the most engaging discussions of his career despite the fact great-grandfather made him feel like he was standing in a dock with Jesus on the one

side and Sir Redmond Barry, 'the hanging judge', on the other. His first impression was of a cranky, old bastard sitting in chair directing the action.

Oake was particularly interested to know how great-grandfather had managed to scrape up the money to set up a billiard room. Opening a new business in the midst of a recession was a brave move. Billiard tables, scoreboards, equipment, racks, framed copies of rules and so on, it was an expensive exercise. He was also interested in great-grandfather's personal life. 'There was a barney in the Lindrum household over his marriage to Harriet,' great-grandfather told him. His mother disinherited him. That caused him a great deal of pain and he never spoke to nor saw his mother again. Some time later, he fell in with the touts (gambling men). Card playing. The gee gees. Prize Fighting. Wood chopping. The whole box and dice. He had made a tidy sum out the gold prospectors in the West, enough to open the billiard room. Oake wanted to ask about the little girl. Instead, he made a mental note to do his homework and, later, reflected on the certificate from the Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages. The birth was registered a month after the delivery by a Susie Atkins. Harriet's sister perhaps? Lindrum was listed as the father but he wasn't a 'painter'.' He felt the need to don his archaeologist hat and do a bit of excavation and later found there were some interesting facts and fascinating coincidences.

For example, my great-grandfather was born the night his father defeated John Roberts Snr. at The York in Adelaide and my great-uncle Walter was born the night my great-grandfather won an important match at the Shamrock in Kalgoorlie. Hearing of Walter's birth actor and opera singer Wallace Brownlow suggested the babe be given the initials W. A. (Brownlow was my great-grandfather's landlord).

'You remember Wallace Brownlow?' my great-grandfather had asked Oake, rummaging in a drawer and finally producing a photograph of

Brownlow playing the role of the Sultan<sup>29</sup> in the 1895 revival of Gilbert & Sullivan's *Ma mie Rosette*. Hand-painted, the photograph was like a frame from a Melies<sup>30</sup> film. Caught in the moment, great-grandfather pulled out a second photo. 'Do you remember George Sorlie?' he asked not waiting for the reply. 'Sorlie made tough men cry. Why, when he played Simon Legree in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*<sup>31</sup> you couldn't hear a pin drop. He got his big break in show business when Billy Brown – Brown was a brilliant ad lib comedian – wanted a song and dance partner for a new act. The pair brought the house down at the *Tivoli* with the song "I wannabee a Song and Dance Man". Press dubbed Sorlie Australia's answer to Al Jolson.

Oake enjoyed the theatre but he wanted to know more about the Lindrums so he put the interview back on track by asking great-grandfather why, given his success in Western Australia, he'd moved back to the east coast and, more particularly, why Melbourne?

Great-grandfather told him: 'Harriet and I fell in love with Melbourne. Our daughter Clara was born here. When the bank crash came in 1893 we couldn't afford to stay but vowed when we made our fortune we'd come back and spend it in dear, old Melbourne Town.' Then, to Oake's surprise, he broke into song.

Goodbye Melbourne Town, Melbourne town, goodbye.  
I am leaving you today, for a city far away.  
Although today I'm stony broke, without a single brown,  
when I earn my fortune, I'll come back and spend it in  
dear, old Melbourne Town.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Reference to first performance of *Ma Mie Rosette* presented by Williamson & Musgrove's Royal Comic Opera Company "The Firm", at the Miner's Institute in Kalgoorlie as reported in the '*Kalgoorlie Miner*', June 21, 1898. Brownlow's leading lady was Nellie Stewart.

<sup>30</sup> Marie-Georges-Jean Melies (1861-1938) – French illusionist, filmmaker and prolific innovator in the use of special effects, Melies is famous for leading many technical and narrative developments in the early days of film.

<sup>31</sup> An anti-slavery novel published by Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1852.

<sup>32</sup> My great-uncle Walter used to sing this song to me on the billiard room step at Albert Park.

Oake then asked the question journalists were still asking five decades later. 'How did you learn to play billiards?' Great-grandfather told Oake he had grown up in an atmosphere of billiards with his baby memories stacked with talk of three ball miracles. He could not remember a day when he was not exercising his cue.

'My father sought perfection on the green baize in the same way Paganini searched for perfection on a violin. His teaching methodology did not allow for minds to wander or feet to slip from the stance chalked to the floor to which I was glued for hours on end. Instructed to execute the same shot over and over and over, a slight smack across the legs with a cane served as a reminder to maintain focus. Sticking to the one-ball shot was exhausting. When my back ached, which it frequently did after eight hours of practice, my father told me to begin again.'

Training also included what his father called 'fresh air revives'. Eyes needed rest after playing billiards. Walks on the beach or the springy turf of an open park, a cool breeze blowing by, followed by a strong cup of tea, a light meal and an early night.

Great-grandfather adopted the same methodology to teach his sons and grandson, continuously reminding them that billiards was a clean, healthy, manly sport – a sport played by Royalty – and they were obliged to represent the sport to the very best of their ability which included starching their shirts and polishing their shoes till they could see their faces in the shine.

Respectability was paramount.

'The practice regime sounds like child abuse!' Oake proffered knowing full well he would be slapped in the face.

'Don't be ridiculous,' great-grandfather barked.

‘You have to put your shoulder to the wheel if you want to make something of yourself. There is no escaping the hard yards, not if you want to become a craftsman. Tea?’

Later, Oake discussed this interview with an old friend over a pint of Victoria Bitter. ‘There was a bit of a fracas in the household when Lindrum came to teach his eldest to play’ he confided. ‘He told me, there was no way on God’s earth he was going to teach a left-hander. Left-handers cavort with the devil.’ A commonly held belief in those days. Ironically, my great-grandfather was later forced to tutor my great-uncle Walter with the left as Walter severed the top of the index finger of his right hand in a terrible accident in the washhouse. His sister said: ‘The accident just happened.’ Walter said: ‘Clara goaded me to stick my hand into the jaws of the mangle.’ The sibling rivalry was something fierce.

Great-grandfather wouldn’t be quizzed on the rivalry. Thankfully, my great-uncle Walter was right-eyed and the right-eyed player should play with the left hand because it balances the body. Of course, inherited genius was a factor but the ability to make a thousand break was not written on any of their birth certificates. Training the eye, repetition, coaching in the essentials – art of patience, art of confidence, science of critical evaluation – turned the Lindrums into champions.<sup>33</sup>

Lindrum’s in Flinders Lane was an overnight success and – over three generations – a day didn’t pass without a story so you can only imagine how some of us felt when the demolition boys moved in. Ah, well, you can’t halt progress! Fortunately, the Ringmaster, the Perfectionist and the Man of Figures were not alive to see them stripping the walls and chucking billiard balls into boxes. It cut the Showman to the core. I still carry the pain and pull myself

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<sup>33</sup> The Lindrums reached the Inner Temple by developing the essentials – the patience of Job, the eye of the surgeon and the judgment of Solomon.

through it by dredging memories from the depths of a place deep within me that I wouldn't know was there except I do.

Turning the page of an album, I sit for a time admiring a black and white photograph of the two brothers. The Man of Figures wears a cheeky grin. The Perfectionist is poised for the shot. In the shadows is a young man in his early teens. He is supposed to be ironing billiard tables. Instead, he is watching his uncles at play. The look on his face says: 'I want to be doing what you are doing.' How he came to be in the moment is a story unto itself. For the present all I am going to say is, his mother – my grandmother – had landed herself in a sticky situation. A situation you and I might call a mess and the Ringmaster felt it in the boy's interests for him to spend time in Melbourne whilst she sorted herself out.

When Horace first arrived in Melbourne in September, 1924, the boy who became my father resided with his grandparents, uncles and cousin, Irene May Dunn, at number 4 Church Street, South Melbourne. Midway through 1928 the family bought a house in Kerferd Road. It was described by the agents as:

Within easy walking distance of the tram to the city, this substantial four-bedroom home is situate on a large corner block, a cooe from Port Melbourne and St. Kilda, and a short distance to the best milk bar in the country.

In the 1920's Albert Park was not a chic suburb. To the contrary, it was a suburb awash with bordellos but great-grandfather figured the council would flush the whores out sooner or later, which they did. The big attraction was the shed at the rear of the house which was big enough to accommodate a full-size practice table.

For Horace, living in Melbourne had its pluses and its minuses. He missed his Mum terribly but loved life in the billiard room, especially when the Ringmaster wasn't around and he could practice his snooker. When the

Ringmaster caught him in the act he would lock the snooker balls in the cupboard and lecture Horace on the billiards tradition.

The Perfectionist went to London for his second crack at the world crown shortly after the family moved to Albert Park. While he was away Horace made his debut into the professional league.

## Chapter Two

### Horace's star in the ascendancy

In 1927 Al Jolson's film *The Jazz Singer*<sup>34</sup> steamrolled the world into a new chapter in the history of moviemaking. By the 1930's talkies had become a global phenomenon, so, too, had Sir George Alfred Julius's totalisator. Designed for fair voting, State Premiers in Australia refused to back the invention so Julius converted the machine for gambling ends. The first machine was installed in the Ellerslie racecourse in Auckland and by 1970 gambling had become Australia's biggest export.

Inside the Lindrum household life went on as per usual. Practice session followed by practice session which might sound like drudgery but life as a Lindrum was anything but mundane. It was a circus, a great vaudeville show with all the razzle dazzle of side show alley. In fact, I would go as far as to say, there was more razamatazz in the Lindrum household than you would ever find on stage at the Princess Theatre.

For me, it was like sitting in the front row watching Elaine Paige<sup>35</sup> making her debut on Broadway.

I could smell the grease paint.

I can still smell the grease paint.

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<sup>34</sup> The maverick Warner Brothers had backed a winner. but it was Thomas Eddison who believed movies could talk.

<sup>35</sup> Born Elaine Jill Bickerstaff (05-03-1948–), English singer / actress Elaine Paige made her West End debut in the musical *Hair* at the age of 16 years (1964). In 1978 she performed as Eva Peron in the musical *Evita*, winning the Laurence Olivier award for her performance. Paige made her debut on Broadway to critical acclaim as Norma Desmond in the musical *Sunset Boulevard* (1996).

Horace's diary of May 07, 1928, notes:

Aviator Bert Hinkler has just completed his record-breaking solo flight from England to Australia. Fifteen days and one hundred and twenty-eight flying hours.

Boy, oh boy!

What an achievement.

Me? Well, I've just made my debut at the billiard table.

My uncle Walter gave me a thrashing.

I was so nervous, the sweat was pouring out of me.

Why did I agree to be his punching bag?

That was a big mistake.

Goodness knows what Mum is going to say about it.

The press had a field day.

They kept asking me how I felt.

How do they think I felt!

Uncle Walter clearly had something on his mind the day he suggested he and Horace go for a walk. Horace could see he was troubled. He had the look men get when something is gnawing away at their insides. Horace asked him:

'What's up, uncle?' He put his arm around him and said:

'Come on, let's go down to the St. Kilda Pier.'

Albert Park to St. Kilda Pier is a good walk. It took them just over an hour, maybe a little longer. Horace didn't mind the walk to Luna Park because there was always the chance of a ride on the Big Dipper. Although, on this occasion, he did not count his chances very high as his uncle Walter did not look to be in the mood for the roller coaster. He bought him an icecream and he was halfway through it when Walter asked: 'Tell me, how would you like to make your debut into the professional league?'

Walter had an innovative strategy aimed at catching and frying two big fish. The first fish was British billiards champion Willie Smith of Darlington.

Some say the game plan was born out of revenge for Willie beating his brother in the world championship but Horace believed that Walter just wanted to be somebody and to be somebody he had to beat Willie Smith of Darlington because Willie Smith of Darlington was the greatest scoring force on the planet. Walter had every confidence he could beat Smith.

The second fish was a known associate of his granddad's. His name was John Wren. Walter wanted Mr. Wren to sponsor his passage to the Mother country. Horace had heard the name Wren and racked his brain to remember exactly what he had heard about him. Then it came to him. Mr. Wren was the ex-factory worker who had made a fortune betting his life savings on Carbine in the 1890 Melbourne Cup. He used the windfall to establish an illegal betting operation in a coffee shop in Collingwood. Horace didn't know how many times the police raided that place but reading about the raids was like reading a comic book. Police hiding in hay carts. Masked men jumping fences and disappearing through trap doors.

Wren rose to prominence and became one of the two kings of SP bookmaking in Australia. The other king was racehorse owner and head of the Tattersall's club in Melbourne, Solomon Green. Rumour had it to get anywhere with Wren or Green you had to be 'liked'. This is where uncle Walter's confidence came into play. Uncle Walter wasn't afraid of anybody. He was the possessor of an incurable confidence. Short, stocky, black-haired, big-eared, square-jawed and pudgy-faced, he was an almost freckle-less version of the archetypal bully. You only had to take one look at him to know he would never be backwards in coming forwards. Grandma Violet (Clara) told me he was a handful to bring up. He was the sort of kid you'd send to do the shopping and he'd come home with a whole heap of things that weren't on the list. She also told me about the squabbles between Walter and herself and said, when Walter wasn't fighting with her in the washhouse, he was bragging like a trouper in the street. The bragging led to fisticuffs and to her mother downing tools and

racing into the street to break up the great war her son had started. 'Christ! Dearie, your son's a match for Ned Kelly,' the next-door neighbour used to say.

Great-grandma turned the hose on uncle Walter more than once. Not that the hose would have done anything to wash away his belief in himself. If the family had slapped him in a straitjacket, he'd have still performed a Harry Jansen, aka Dante, King of all Magicians. Uncle Walter was a brilliant billiard player. He thrashed the locals. As an adult, he even had the Russell Street police wrapped around his little finger. Anyone else would have been booked for leaving their model-T in bumper-to-bumper traffic and catching the tram home. Not Walter. Police washed and polished the car and drove it back to Kerferd Road. No warnings. Warnings would have been a complete waste of time. If they'd have given Walter a warning, he'd have shot back: 'There is no way I am going to sit in traffic jams when I could be practicing billiards. You blokes need to fix the roads.'

Horace confessed he was concerned about Walter doing business with Mr. Wren and he wanted to know and understand where Walter saw him fitting into the picture. Walter confided he'd been cabling Willie Smith for months pleading with Smith to play him. Willie told him to get lost. You see, Smith didn't play anybody. You had to prove yourself before he'd throw down the glove. Even great-grandfather's line to the British press: 'Walter is the greatest thing since sliced bread' failed to draw a reaction from Smith. It did, however, spike British curiosity. The full-faced, heavy-eyed Claude Falkiner and the pretty Harry W. Stevenson (known as the Beau Brummel of Billiards because of his striking good looks) were sent to play Walter and report the results.

Walter played well against Falkiner and, in the first of two matches against Stevenson outscored Stevenson 2-1 but his play was inconsistent. In the second match, Stevenson got his own back. Scoring at phenomenal speed he completely demoralised his opponent. After Walter's loss to Stevenson the Fleet Street press wrote: 'The Colonial ego is bigger than Everest. Today Everest is

looking more like Mount Blanc.’ Headlines like this one didn’t worry great-grandfather nor did they worry Walter. To the contrary, it was “Cry God for Harry, England and St. George!”<sup>36</sup>

The tragedy of the publicity campaign was that it gathered momentum and, over time, served to displace the Perfectionist and dilute the real story of the Lindrum family. Maybe this is just the way of the world but I don’t know that for certain. I can’t know because the condensation of stories is not something that happens over night, it takes time to build a fictitious mythology. Frederick, for example, was still hallowed as the greatest billiardist Australia had ever produced when he met my father in the final of the Australian professional billiards championship in 1933. It is only in very recent times that history has been rewritten, contemporary critics serving readers the spirit of Perfectionist and Showman in a form far removed from the authentic versions of these champions.

Years later my great-uncle Walter told Horace he’d been studying Smith’s play and he had found a way to outscore him by concentrating on nursery cannons. If he could get him to the table, he would beat him and then he would be home and hosed. ‘Think what a world title would mean to your granddad, Horace,’ he said. Horace had absolutely no idea what home and hosed meant, but he did know what a world title meant to his granddad because he was forever telling him that his dearest wish was for a Lindrum to win one. He’d even carved out a special place for the trophy and described – in great detail – how it would look on the wall. The fact that the trophy was a perpetual trophy (it couldn’t be brought home to Australia) didn’t seem to bother him one iota.

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<sup>36</sup> Last line of the famous speech beginning with the words: ‘Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more’, from Act III Shakespeare’s play Henry V, thought to have been first performed at the Curtain theatre in 1599, the same year the Lord Chamberlain’s Men opened the new Globe theatre. The play was performed by the King’s Men at the new Globe on January 7, 1605. It is believed actor Robert Burbage played the role of Henry V on that occasion.

'I need a sparring partner, young Horace. Someone good enough to play me and good enough to let me win. This is your big opportunity,'

'Why don't you play uncle Frederick?' Horace asked.

'If I play Frederick, he won't play ball with me and there is no guarantee I will win and, if I lose in front of Smith, Smith won't have a bar of me nor will Mr. Wren. You are my only hope of putting my hat in the ring and getting to London.' This was probably true as there were no other billiardists in Australia at that time who could match skills with the Lindrum aristocracy.

My great-uncle Walter explained to Horace that if they worked together to convince Smith that Walter was a threat to his supremacy Smith would throw down the glove and, when that happened, Mr. Wren would not be able to resist the thrill of the contest as gambling was deeply ingrained in his psyche and there was no limit to the amount of money he would pay out if Walter could prove himself capable of beating the British at their game. Horace harboured his concerns. He wanted to make his debut into the professional league but at what cost? Walter could see his nephew was having reservations and he knew his sister would be furious when she found out he had used her son as an instrument to his own ends. He offered Horace a carrot. 'Let's play snooker as well as billiards.' That was the carrot that set the ball rolling on Horace's professional career but not before Horace expressed his concerns to his grandfather. His grandfather told him it was a good plan and raised the issue of his surname. 'Your uncle Walter and I have been talking. We think you should change your name. Bloody good publicity if another Lindrum enters the ring and you, my boy, are more than good enough to carry the Lindrum flag.' And, from that time forward, Horace became known as Horace Lindrum.

Reporting on Horace's debut, the Australian press wrote:

Coaxing the balls with deceptive ease and a firm but delicate touch, this was a display of superlative skill. Horace and Walter Lindrum made the balls do everything but beg!

A force to be reckoned with, they were genii who, as time passed, came to be identified, first as brothers and, later, as one and the same man.

Smith read the review but he didn't throw down the glove as Walter had expected him to do, so Walter was forced to plead with Mr. Wren for assistance. Wren told Walter he liked his form, dubbed him 'The Phar Lap<sup>37</sup> of Billiards' and suggested they go and see Smith together. 'I am sure we can persuade him to play you,' he comforted. 'Where did you say he was staying?'

'The Lord Nelson.'

'You know, Walter, there is no limit to the amount I am prepared to outlay if I think you can beat the British at their game. If you have any doubts as to my capacity you should speak to Plugger<sup>38</sup> – (the famous cyclist, Hubert Opperman) – Plugger and I go back a long way.'

Wren and Lindrum arrived at the hotel for their meeting with Smith. Smith listened intently to their proposals and spent some time staring at the sizable cheque Wren had placed on the table in front of him. Finally, he picked it up, held it to the light as if he were checking the validity of the signature, walked to the bar and whispered something to the bartender. The bartender nodded. Wren and Lindrum were too far away to see what Smith was doing but

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<sup>37</sup> Phar Lap (1926-1932) was a famous thoroughbred racehorse during the Depression years who captured the imagination of the Australian nation. Foaled in New Zealand, Phar Lap 'the Wonder Horse' was trained and raced by Harry Telford. Winning 36 of 41 starts, Phar Lap was struck down by a mysterious illness a fortnight after winning America's richest horse race, the "Agua Caliente" handicap, in 1932. The death is attributed to foul play.

<sup>38</sup> Sir Hubert Ferdinand Opperman OBE (1904-1996), known affectionately by Australian and French crowds as 'Oppy'. Opperman was an Australian cyclist and Liberal politician whose endurance cycling feats earned him international fame in the 1920's and 30's.

it soon became apparent. Holding a lighted match between his thumb and first finger, Smith slowly connected the match to the corner of the cheque and, throwing the burning paper into the fireplace, bowed and bid the pair, 'Good evening, gentlemen'.

Wren was not used to people saying 'No'.

'Leave this to me,' he ordered.

The glove was delivered to Kerferd Road two days later. The amount Wren paid Smith remains 'commercial in confidence'. Wren's handshake with Walter also remains 'commercial in confidence'.

When Clara saw the headline 'Horace Lindrum makes his debut' she was as happy as a lark. When she learned the price her son had paid to enter the professional league she read the riot act. Clara believed a youngster appearing for the first time in public, even though he was the better performer of the two competitors, would inevitably succumb to the superior tactics and greater confidence of the more experienced player. This fact was well-known to both her brother and her father. She believed they had taken unfair advantage of her son. Horace refused to talk about the row but told me his mother insisted he memorise the Commandments of Sport.

Thou shalt not quit.

Thou shalt not alibi.

Thou shalt not gloat over winning.

Thou shalt not sulk over losing.

Thou shalt not take unfair advantage. Thou shalt not ask odds thou art unwilling to give.

Thou shalt always be willing to give thine opponent the benefit of the doubt.

Thou shalt not underestimate an opponent or over-estimate thyself.

Remember that the game is the thing. he or she who thinks otherwise is no true sportsman / sportswoman. Honour the game, for he / she who plays the game straight and hard wins even when he / she loses'

Much later, great-grandfather informed Clara he had cut her out of his last will and testament. 'You don't need my money, you've got a son to look after you.' That didn't bother Clara. The only thing that had ever concerned her was getting the right messages through to her son.

'You will never, never, never have anything to do with gambling men. Do you understand me, Horace?' She then set about devising a scheme to put him on an entirely different pathway. The Great White Hope played an important role in the execution of his sister's plan. While Clara was planning her son's career, Walter was falling in love with Rosie Coates.

1928/29

Rosie was sitting in the front row when Horace made his debut. She was also sitting in the front row at the Sydney Town Hall for the opening night of the week's match-play between Walter and Willie Smith. All was going well till midway through the week. What happened after that is anyone's guess. Rosie was admitted to the Omrah private hospital in Darlinghurst<sup>39</sup> around 10.00 am on Thursday morning. Rumour has it she was hit by a bus. The hush-hush circumstances surrounding her internment suggests something else altogether. Members of the press noticed the empty seat and were dying to ask: 'Where's Rosie?' but the opportunity didn't present itself.

At 2.00pm sharp the referee made the introductions. Walter and Willie came together and shook hands. The atmosphere was one of absolute decorum. Well-known critic C. D. Dimsdale<sup>40</sup> described the scene:

'Except for the occasional applause, voices were subdued, cigarettes and pipes lit almost furtively for disturbing a player on his stroke. The only noise was the

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<sup>39</sup> Darlinghurst is on the outskirts of the Sydney CBD near the fashionable and trendy suburb of Paddington.

<sup>40</sup> Born Rodolphe Louis Megroz (1891-1968), British writer, critic and poet – C. D. Dimsdale – (who also wrote under the pseudonym of Roy Cumberland), trained as a journalist, worked as a freelance writer and, during World War II, was engaged by the BBC.

click of the balls, the crash of one driven hard into a pocket and the referee calling score.'

Willie Smith moved to the table. A practical man, he wasted no time with preliminaries. He chalked the tip of his cue. Not a sound except for the soft scrape, scrape, scrape. Cue leveled like a rifle, he held the butt lightly, eased his chest along the tubular body and took aim. A soft tap, tap, tap. Smith gained position. Then, tightening the grip on the butt, cue tip struck ball low and hard with the force of a boxer's half-arm jab.

One, two.

Ker-plunk.

Walter sat quietly on the sidelines. The Prince of Players was oblivious to the first-class billiards being played out in front of him. He was thinking of Rosie and the son or daughter he would never come to know.

A ball skidded across the cloth. A drop-cannon; the first object ball, cue ball and second object ball joined together at the top of the table. From a positional perspective the drop-cannon can be deceptive. Easy to score, it can leave a player with a liability. The ball stopped a fraction of an inch short. A fatal blunder! Smith shrugged his shoulders, he'd been playing billiards for a long time and knew the balls can sometimes run unkindly.

Walter pulled himself together and walked to the table. Practice, the right royal road to success, was to serve him well. Delivering his cue straight and smooth he began to score at an amazing speed with inexorable precision and uncanny manipulation of the balls.

Stunned, Smith sat on the edge of his seat. The maestro had miraculously found his form and the brilliant technical performance now being played out before a packed house overflowing into the street was one of such perennial importance it had nowhere else to go but into the history books as one of the greatest billiards displays of all time.

Loud applause drowned the referee's voice as the Man of Figures allowed a wry smile to creep across his face. Rosie's silver tea service was nearly in the bag. Straightening his back, he paused to wet his vocal chords. It was a long drink but his eyes remained fixated on the three balls lying close together at the top of the table.

Smith winced, looked down at his shoes.

Two thousand. Two thousand and two.

The Bagmens'<sup>41</sup> saturnine malaise turned to red-blooded euphoria.

'Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Lindrum's break of two thousand and two is a personal best. Mr. Lindrum's previous best was one thousand four hundred and sixty-one. The break of two thousand and two is the third largest on record. The other two records belong to Mr. Lindrum Snr. with a break of 3,000 and Mr. Lindrum's brother Frederick with an unfinished break of 2,196 against that great master of the long red George Gray. We will now proceed to an interval of twenty minutes.'

Pressmen took to telephones and cameramen took to cameras but their subject had flown the coop. Twenty minutes later the referee declared a forfeit.

En-route to the Omrah Private Hospital in Darlinghurst Road Rosie's words were ringing in Walter's head.

"Don't worry, Darl, I'll be okay. I want you to concentrate on winning me that silver tea service."

Why did I go along with it, he asked himself. He was still playing the reel when he pushed the door into Rosie's room. Startled by the sudden entrance, the doctor finished taking Rosie's pulse then, putting a hand on Walter's shoulder, directed him back into the corridor.

Once out of earshot of his patient he gave Walter the news. Two hours later, pallid and weak, Rosie lifted her body to place an 'X' on the marriage certificate. Minutes later she was dead.

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<sup>41</sup> A bookmaker's employee/associate, responsible for settling debts.

Walter lost something of himself that day.

The part of him that stayed behind never stopped loving Rosie.

A few days later Walter took Rosie's body back to Melbourne on the Wodonga Express. I have often imaged the scene. Central station, pigeons fluttering on the steel and glass roof overhead. The famous clock under which everyone arranged to meet. The hustle and bustle of the porters and the teary farewells.

'Everything is in order, Mr. Lindrum. Here are the papers. Arrangements have been made for my colleague to meet the train at Flinders Street station. Please accept our heart-felt condolences.'

Walter thanked them, placed the papers in the inside pocket of his coat, hugged Willie Smith and Hughie Boyle and boarded the train. Once in his compartment, he opened the window and leaned out. Willie was breathing into his palms and rubbing them together to keep himself warm.

'Willie, you're cold. Best get going, my friends. A big thank you to you both for looking after me. Rosie's death may delay my departure to Britain but you know I'll keep faith with the contract. I'll get there sooner or later. In relation to 'The Sun competition', I intend to write to Sir Hugh Denison and suggest that the trophy be presented to you.'

Smith wouldn't hear of it.

'Don't be daft. I can't claim the match on a forfeit not with the kind of lead you had. You won the silver tea service, fair and square. You can serve me a cuppa and a scone or two next time we're in town together. That's what Rosie would expect you to do. See you in England.'

Willie and Hughie waited for the train to disappear then, retracing their footsteps, rejoined sports buff Eric Callaway. 'Let's go, catch up with Duggan and get ourselves a stiff drink,' Willie suggested. A regular Daddy-long-legs, Duggan was propped against the bar at the Fortune of War.

'Sorry I couldn't get to the train, boys. I've been covering the Twickenham Rugby.'

'Looks like you're covering something else.' Boyle's eyes floated in the direction of the barmaid.

'How was Walter?' Duggan asked, ignoring Boyle's cheeky grin.

'Very good, all things considered. Walter's a man of his word. He'll play in England this year.'

The barmaid hovered. A bee around a honeypot.

'What'll it be, boys?'

'Pint of VB for me, thanks,' Boyle responded.

'Make that two, Deary. What about you Eric? Willie?'

Willie thought for a moment.

'Jack Daniels on the rocks.'

Callaway settled for an OP rum.

'I hear you don't practice before a match, Mr. Smith?'

'Never have, my boy. At the end of the playing season, I put my cue away until the start of the next one. I prefer to play myself into form with match-play. I get more than enough practice throughout the season, what with two, two hour sessions a day, six days a week, week in, week out. In the break I re-read the classics.'

'Do you find match-play a great physical strain?'

'The strain is not so much physical strain as strain on the nervous system. You need physical stamina and you need nerves of steel to compile big breaks.'

Duggan lit a cigarette.

'You don't seem to suffer any nerves.'

'No, I'm fortunate. My big breaks have been made under pressure.'

'Do you think Walter suffers from nervous tension?'

'I don't think Walter has a nerve in his body.'

'What about his brother, Frederick?'

‘Frederick is a rare gem. You won’t find too many players in history who have dragged themselves from a hospital bed to play in a world title. Frederick won our match in Melbourne recently. He is the most stylish all-round player I have ever seen. Some players are artists. Some players are men of science. In bygone days the Artiste was number one and there are those who still prefer art to science.’

When Smith’s head finally hit the pillow his mind continued to churn. His adversary had become a friend. He had also become an accomplice.

Walter switched off the small reading light near his head, shivered and pulled the railway blanket up to his chin. He was having difficulty with his body temperature. Gazing into the darkness, he listened to the rhythmic, KER-PLAK, KER-PLAK, KER-PLAK...

‘If only I could turn back the clock,’ he thought to himself.

He pulled the papers from under his pillow.

Rose Ellen Lindrum – Cause of death ‘Peripheral Toxaemic Pyelonephritis’<sup>42</sup>...

‘What are you doing, Rosie?’

Rosie was folding the blue dress he liked so much and packing it gently into a suitcase.

‘Darl.’ She threw her arms around his neck. ‘You take that glum look off that lovely face of yours. Don’t worry about a thing. I will be just fine. Nobody has to know.’

She smiled sweetly.

‘Your father is right.’

Burying his head in the pillow, a grief-stricken Walter sobbed his heart out over what might have been.

Two Years later Clara and Frederick pushed the button on their plan.

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<sup>42</sup> The most severe form of urinary tract infection associated with the *Escherichia coli* pathogen which leads to the rapid destruction of the kidneys.

### The Letter

To: Mr. Frank Smith, the World beating Champion of Australia

Dear Mr. Smith,

I have been in awe of you for some time and feel that I am now ready to challenge you for your title.

Yours sincerely,  
Horace Lindrum

### The response

My dear Mr. Lindrum,

I accept the challenge with one stipulation.

The event will be played in Sydney.

Sincerely yours,  
Frank Smith Jnr., Esquire  
Champion of Australia

The event was played out before a capacity crowd at the Elystan Parlours, number 147A King Street. Before the event the Sporting Referee reported: 'New Lindrum in the field.'

After the event, the headline read:

'Here comes the Fourth Generation. Another star rises in the Lindrum family.'

Handsome, modest, finicky and punctual, 19-year-old-Horace Lindrum has just become the youngest player to win the Australian professional snooker title, but it is his speed play that stupefied the spectators. Breaks of 97 in 4 minutes and 49 seconds!

He is not only the greatest player at his age in the world but the last of the wizards is the perfect billiard picture.

Frank Smith Junior was devastated by the loss. Anticipating a counter-challenge, the Showman kept himself to a rigid routine. He was keen to stay at the top, didn't smoke or drink, watched his diet and made sure he got enough sleep, exercise and fresh air. When the challenge came, he was ready to meet it head on.

Horace Lindrum won't be 20 until January 15 but you can count on the fingers of one hand the players who are capable of extending him in a game of snooker. As a billiardist, too, he is uncanny.

In the final match against Smith he cleared all the colours from the table three times, twice in thirty-two seconds and once in thirty and won the final frame 126 to 2.

Elated at his successes – which had exceeded his wildest dreams – he was sad for his opponent. He didn't have the 'Killer' instinct. Even so, my great-uncle Walter wasn't taking any chances. After Horace's win against Frank Smith he refused to play his nephew in competition.

In 1932 Walter embarked on a line voyage to London on the *Cathay*.<sup>43</sup> He thought he was going to play for the world title. Rosie long dead, his grief travelled with him. I picture the scene.

'Hello there. Hello there.' Smith yelled from the deck.

'Ahoy, there. Yoo-hoo!'

The boys could not see nor hear him so he flew down the ship's staircase, reaching the top of the gangway in time to greet them as they came aboard.

'Walter, Big Horace, Mac – good to see you.'

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<sup>43</sup> *S S Cathay* was built by Barclay, Curle & Co., Glasgow for the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, London, and launched 1924.

From a distance Walter looked okay. Face to face was a different story. Pale and pitifully thin, the Trumper of Billiards<sup>44</sup> was a shadow of his former self. Shaken by his friend's appearance Smith pulled Big Horace and Mac to one side to express his concern.

'Walter doesn't look too good. I've promoted the exhibition events as 'The Greatest Show on Earth' and we've banked the gate. If we are forced to cancel it will cost us.'

'Don't worry, he'll pull through. The sea voyage will do him a world of good.'

During the daylight hours, fellow passengers gossiped about the man in the Steamer-style lounge who pulled a blanket over his head when he saw them coming.

'Tch, tch, tch, how rude! What can he be thinking?'

They would have been horrified to know the answer to that question. Walter's eye was in Rosie's coffin. In thoughts of his beloved buried under all that soil with only the *Megascolides Australis*<sup>45</sup> to keep her company. Rarely did he put in an appearance at dinner and, when he did, he ate like a sparrow, excused himself, returned to the cabin, lay on his bunk and listened to his gramophone play "Walking my Baby Back home".<sup>46</sup>

Low spirits took his soul to a place where it had never been before and two weeks into the voyage he attempted suicide. Big Horace found him just in the nick of time.

'Christ Almighty, Walter.'

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<sup>44</sup> Victor Thomas Trumper (1877-1915). Considered to be the most stylish and versatile batsman of the Golden Age of Cricket. My great-uncle Walter was compared to Bradman, Phar Lap and Trumper.

<sup>45</sup> A species of Australian earth worm.

<sup>46</sup> Popular song published in 1930 with lyrics by Roy Turk and music by Fred E. Ahlert. The song inspired the 1953 musical of the same name starring Donald O'Connor, Janet Leigh and Buddy Hackett.

The doctor listened to his patient's stomach then reached for the Ewald tube. Over the following days, he counselled Walter and confided: 'You and I have something in common.'

For the doctor it was his wife and daughters.

House fire. Undetected gas leak.

'Didn't you feel like giving up?' Walter asked him.

'Of course, I did. I felt just like you do and I asked myself the same questions about life that you are asking yourself. See this photo.' He picked up the framed picture sitting on his desk.

'My girls gave me the answer. The purpose of life is to come to know the Self. Your Rosie came into your life to help you to achieve that end. You must not rob her of her purpose.'

Walter thought long and hard about the doctor's philosophy. By the time the *Cathay* reached Colombo he was enjoying the odd Fox Trot and, on the final leg – the boat train from Southampton to Victoria Station – he joined Mac in his exercise regime. On the train Mac was limited to eye-rolling, push-ups, flexing of finger joints and signing of autographs. That is what they were doing when the train slid into the platform at Waterloo.

'Come on, boys,' Willie yelled.

'We have arrived.'

The London welcome was first-rate.

'Willie, my good man, good to have you home. London hasn't been the same without you,' chortled James (Jake) C. Bisset, the chairman of the Association, grabbing his friend warmly in a bear hug.

'Morning, Mrs. Jenkins,' Bisset had chirped that morning tipping the hard felt hat with the rounded crown made famous by Thomas & William Bowler. 'I'm off to the station to welcome my International visitors. No idea how long I will be. I'm sure you can manage.' A damn fine bookkeeper, Jenkins had been

Bisset's personal assistant at the Arundel Hotel for longer than he or she could remember. If the truth be known she was in love with him.

On a normal business day Bisset skipped down the steps around 8.30am and set off on his stroll to Cecil Chambers, the Strand. In summer, daffodils. In winter, a black wool coat with Persian lamb lapels to shield against the sleet. No matter the weather, his was a confident stride to the swing of the conventional black umbrella.

From Knightsbridge to Hyde Park corner, past the Duke of Wellington and up Constitution Hill to the Queen Victoria Memorial. Down the Mall to Admiralty Arch. Arriving at the offices of the Control Council around 9.30am, Bisset would spend the next three hours reading mail, issuing instructions to staffers, playing politics and dictating letters to an assistant whose Pitman's shorthand was the talk of the town. Finishing around 12.30pm, he'd make his way to Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese where he'd indulge in a fat slice of steak n' kidney pud swimming in a thick gravy sauce and listen to the local gossip. A man of few and direct words, he ran a tight and profitable ship which funded his good life. Annual escapes to Tunisia, the occasional weekend at Maxims and Le Palais de Glas. Special hobbies; billiards, ballroom dancing and ornithology, each hobby occupying a separate compartment in his life.

Mac followed Smith from the train. Tall, slim, confident and imbued with a great sense of calm, his long-lantern like jaw gave him a somewhat melancholy appearance. Mac maintained this stern countenance throughout his career, delighting audiences with his stupendous play and acknowledging the applause with only the slightest of nods. Rarely did the 'real' Mac put in an appearance. The real Mac had twinkling eyes, knew how to make people laugh till their cheeks ached and was known to cartwheel down Oxford Street.

British journalists compared Mac to the great hypnotist Svengali as it was so easy to fall under his spell. Australian journalists compared him to the British champion Diggle. Yet Svengali and Diggle were Mac's polar opposites.

Svengali went around laughing at the wrong thing at the wrong time. This is something Mac would never do and, whilst there were physical similarities between Mac and Diggle, Diggle was aggressive by nature and horribly awkward at the billiard table; he stood upright and his bridge hand looked like a Huntsman spider<sup>47</sup> whereas Mac's body fell beautifully over his cue and his magnificent long-fingered bridge was as delicate as rose petal jelly.

Minutes after Mac stepped from the train Walter emerged and stood framed in the carriage entrance. The language of Walter's body said: 'I have arrived'. Fedora<sup>48</sup> set at a jaunty angle, left hand clutching his cue case. Frank Barnes sports writer for the *'The Daily Express'* gave his first impressions in an article on the front page of *'The London Times'*:

Here we were, expecting a loud-mouthed, big, burly bushman and Lindrum was charming and refreshingly down to earth.

Clearly overwhelmed by the welcome, we couldn't get a bloody word out of him for the first hour. After that he chatted away as if he'd known us all his life. If first impressions count for anything, he's top-notch.

Barnes turned up at the Strand Palace Hotel early the next morning in the hope of an interview. The concierge was helpful, directing him to Covent Garden. Frank thanked him and walked the block. The Australian wouldn't be hard to spot. Walter, hat perched at the same angle, was leaning on a pillar outside the Theatre Royal. A crowd had gathered. Highly amused by the Australian twang, their interest turned to hysterics when the little Australian

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<sup>47</sup> Sparassidae is a family of spiders known as Huntsman spiders because of their speed and mode of hunting. They are also known as giant crab spiders because of their size and appearance. Long-legged, grey / brown in colour, they frequently take up residence in sheds and garages. Larger members of the species are known as wood spiders.

<sup>48</sup> A felt hat with a wide brim and indented crown. The word 'fedora' comes from the title of a play by the same name written by Victorien Sardou in 1882 for the famous actress Sarah Bernhardt. The play was first performed in the United States in 1889 and the heroine in the play wore a fedora, making the hat a symbol for women's rights. After Prince Edward started wearing it in 1924, it became popular among men for its stylishness.

jumped upon a ledge, curled his body around a lamp post and started singing:

“You made me love you! I didn’t want to do it. I didn’t want to do it”<sup>49</sup>...

Barnes shook his head.

‘Gracious, Walter, you’re a character! We’ll have to get you a busker’s license. Now...’ glancing at his watch ‘I’ve got a political luncheon today, but it’s still quite early, shall we grab a coffee?’

‘That sounds like a good idea. I had planned on walking to Frascatis for a Hazlenut macaroon.’

‘Walter, Frascatis is in Oxford Street.’

‘I know,’ Walter responded cheerily. ‘The concierge gave me directions.’ He pulled out his map...

‘Walking is the only way to get to know a city. I like to look into people’s faces and I’ve been told not to come home without a bottle of Penhaligon Bluebell and some Lavandula hand cream.’

‘Mmmm!’ Barnes responded. ‘Breakfast with a weapon at the Wolseley (fresh orange juice laced with ginger). Afternoon tea at the Ritz. Bag of Blueberry Marshmallows from Fortnum & Mason and a night at the Royal Opera. I get the general idea.’

‘I came prepared.’ Walter pulled his wallet, flicked the notes inside and grinned from ear to ear.

Whilst Frank and Walter were walking across London, Jake Bisset was locked in discussions with his second-in-command, the slightly built and enigmatic, A. Stanley Thorn. Mild and gentle on the outside, Thorn was hard boiled at the core.

‘Cuppa, JC?’ Thorn asked.

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<sup>49</sup> *News of the World* greatest song of the year, 1913. Composed by James V. Monaco with lyrics by Joseph McCarthy, the song was published in 1913 and recorded by Al Jolson on June 4, 1913. Jolson later performed the song on the soundtrack to the motion picture *The Jolson Story* (1946) starring Larry Parks.

'Later, Thorn. I've been thinking about Walter Lindrum. If he's as good as they say he is, he will be a great asset to our next championship. What do we know about his contract with Willie Smith?'

Thorn fell to twisting the corners of his handlebar moustache and studying the picture of Brizzie Lizzie on the wall.

'Well, Mr. Thorn?' Bisset sounded impatient.

'I don't think we know anything other than a contract has been signed between Lindrum of Australia, McConachy of New Zealand and our Willie Smith.'

'Have you considered the implications, Mr. Thorn?'

'I am not sure that I follow, Sir,' he replied, tapping his pipe for a refill of Hermit's Ten Russians.

Bisset passed a hand over his forehead, fingering the small cyst near his right temple which got bigger when he experienced a blinding shot of the obvious.

'Smith is under contract to table manufacturers Burroughs & Watts and I'll make you a bet the contract dictates he can only play on a Burroughs & Watts table. The contract Lindrum and McConachy have signed may place the same restriction on them. That means the world's greatest players might be prevented from vying for the world crown.' Bisset stared into the soft blue cloud of smoke pouring from Thorn's pipe. The smell was intoxicating.

'Close the door, Mr. Thorn. Close the door.'

The arrangements for the competition for the professional championship will be considered at a meeting of the Billiards Association & Control Council tomorrow and every one will be hoping that there will be a settlement to the present predicament. It will be regrettable if a championship cannot be arranged in which all and not some of the leading players can participate.

The remarkable form shown by both Walter Lindrum of Australia and Clark McConachy of New Zealand has proved that if either of these players challenges for the title – which at present is held by Joe Davis – there will be a very big chance of the championship being won by a competitor from overseas.

McConachy has beaten Davis in the two games they have played, while Lindrum has shown that – on the balance of results in matches between them – he is a more powerful scoring force.

While the complications that have arisen may have been avoidable, there is no reason to suppose that the difficulties cannot be overcome and, in the interests of the game both here and in Australia and New Zealand, it is to be hoped a compromise will be found.

Burroughs & Watts – who had played a role in bringing my great-uncle and Clark McConachy to Britain – although exactly what role they played is unclear, refused permission for them to play on a table other than one manufactured by their company and, despite earnest pleas from every conceivable bona fide source, the Directors of Burroughs & Watts held their ground. One journalist was so upset about what he referred to as ‘Hanky-panky’, he wrote:

There should be no question of the authority of the Control Council, and no attempt on the part of any other group or individual to dictate the conditions of the world championship.

The competition should be wholly dissociated from the use or advertising of billiard tables or implements of any particular manufacturer. It should be so arranged as to afford to all players the opportunity to take part, and then it should be possible to hold a competition for the championship which would be worthy of the name, otherwise we might as well hand Joe the title without asking him to pick up a cue.

Prevented from participation in the world championship and before disappointment could hijack him Walter and his gramophone embarked on an exhibition tour, reaching Toronto, Canada, in March, 1932. 'The gramophone prevents me from getting headaches,' he told a journalist at *'The Toronto Star'*. What the reporter didn't know was the gramophone and recording of "Walking my baby back home" were clamped to Walter's soul as an anchor is clamped to a sea bed.

Rosie forever in his sights, Walter walked the road to glory. Headlines like: 'Another Big Break for Lindrum and Lindrum's brilliant form' became commonplace. Strangely, his success did nothing for his bank account. An Unusual Suspect was the primary beneficiary. That 'Suspect' was none other than gambling giant John Wren who had made sure, from the outset, that the financial arrangements were weighted in his favour. He loved the gamble. It was the one thing in the world that made him feel alive. His blood flowed faster through his veins. His pulse beat more quickly. It gave him the thrill that nothing else could provide. But why my great-uncle Walter passed the right to use his name on cues manufactured by British cuemaker Perdons for 'eternity' and why he returned to the sporting capital of Australia owing money remains a mystery. Perhaps he took his chances and Lady Luck failed to deliver the ace. Lady Luck runs in streaks and one can have an exceptionally bad run of luck. On the other hand, doing business with Mr. Wren may have been one stupid, fatal blunder on his part.

Walter's tours were recorded for newsreels. As one noted:

Not since the days of the great John Roberts has there been so much interest in the game of billiards. Australia's Walter Lindrum has today taken the world of billiards by storm by defeating long-term champion, Joe Davis, for the world professional billiards title. It remains to be seen whether Davis can win it back. Meanwhile, Lindrum has told the press:

‘If Davis wants the crown back, he’ll have to come to Australia to get it.’

Australian reaction to this news was entirely predictable.

‘Walter Lindrum is the greatest nugget to come out of the west.’ The British response was outrage! As for family sentiment towards Walter’s registry office marriage to Alicia (Auntie Pat) on April 9, 1933, well, that was infused with a similar tone. We all liked Auntie Pat. Well, some of us liked her. Great-grandfather didn’t care for Rosie or Pat. In the Codicil to his last Will and Testament he accused both women of causing trouble. What sort of trouble they caused is not made clear but, whilst news of Walter’s marriage to Pat was not viewed with pleasure, news of the Control Council ban on the nursery cannon was received with indignation and triggered a furious response from Albert Park and an even more furious one from the desk of John Wren.

New Zealand champion Clark McConachy had successfully lobbied the governing body for a change in the rules. McConachy spent hours at the table to prove his point, finally demonstrating to the board that nursery cannon play breached the fifth commandment of sport; Thou shalt not take unfair advantage. But what may appear to have been an obsession with upholding the commandments of sport was also concern for falling box office receipts. The monotony of nursery cannon play was sending the audience to sleep. Shortly after McConachy proved his point, the chairman of the governing body announced the ban and the introduction of the ‘Baulk-line’ rule which required proponents to display ‘all-round’ billiards artistry to entertain the audience. There were now only a handful of players left in the world who possessed the skill to play all-round billiards. Those who could play all-round billiards rose to the top of the snooker tree. Horace Lindrum was one of them.

Then, there was an accident. The Commissioner at the Russell Street station took it on his shoulders to make the journey to Flinders Lane.

'Good afternoon, Fred. I need to see your eldest.'

'Is there a problem, Commissioner?'

Frederick appeared.

'Best sit down, me boy...'

August 2, 1932.

*'The Sydney Telegraph'*

### Famous Billiardist's wife killed in terrific smash

Mrs. F. Lindrum, wife of Mr. F. Lindrum, a leading billiard player, and sister-in-law to Walter Lindrum, champion billiard player of the world, was fatally injured today when a motor car in which she was a passenger was sandwiched between two electric tramcars in Sturt Street, South Melbourne. The driver, William Addison, 43, of Moonee Ponds, lost a finger. Another passenger – Ruth Dale – escaped without injury and – although the car was so much crushed that it broke into pieces when the trams were backed away – the couple's eight-year-old son – Frederick Lindrum IV – survived.

His war records tell the story of a young man who never recovered from post traumatic stress disorder, battled alcoholism and exhibited anger at the world.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Army number VX61110. Frederick's war record reveals that he was battling alcoholism and, on July 13, 1945, he was charged with the offence of 'conduct to the prejudice of good order and Military Discipline' and fined three pounds. On March 6, 1946 he was 'Marched in for disposal' and transferred out for discharge. His home address is shown as the family home in Albert Park and his profession is shown as billiardist.

## Chapter Three

### Clara's story

Horace was born into the Lindrum family as Horace Norman William Morrell on the January 15, 1912 at The Royal Hospital for Women in Glenmore Road, Paddington.

Governor Arthur Phillip once described Paddington as a 'kind of heath, poor, sandy and full of swamps' and, in the third volume of his *Antipodes or Residence and Ramblings in the Australian Colony* (London, 1852), British-born soldier and historian Lieutenant Colonel Godfrey Charles Mundy stated, although 'on one side, towards Port Jackson, the prospect is full of cheerful beauty: on the other, the direction of Botany Bay, it is desolation itself.'<sup>51</sup>

This perception of Paddington changed after a committee headed by colonial Governor Richard Bourke made the decision to move the Redcoats from their ramshackle premises in George Street, Sydney to brand new premises at the corner of Oxford and Moore Park Roads.<sup>52</sup> Completed in 1846, the Victoria Barracks – a magnificent conglomeration of Hawkesbury sandstone buildings in the Georgian style – housed government business and government business drove the local economy. By 1912, however, the once-gentrified village had managed to turn itself back into a slum. A Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde environ. Respectable on the outside, underbelly at its core. Street after street inhabited by families – mum, dad and five or six ragged-arsed kids – living on the smell of an oily rag and teetering on the brink of bankruptcy and side alleys infested by a dragnet of criminals.

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<sup>51</sup> Max Kelly, *Paddock Full of Houses*, (Paddington: Doak Press, 1978), 51.

<sup>52</sup> Built largely by convicts under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Barney of the Royal Engineers and, later, his successor Lieutenant Colonel James Gordon and constructed of Hawkesbury sandstone on a section of a one thousand acre reserve set aside by the visionary Governor Lachlan Macquarie, the Victoria Barracks are a stellar example of Georgian architecture and of great significance to the military and colonial heritage of the state of New South Wales. The Officer's quarters were completed in 1842. The Barracks – built to accommodate 650 British Army soldiers – was completed in 1846.

At the historical root of the urban expansion of what is today a chic, elegant, distinctive, sophisticated, aesthetically pleasing and cosmopolitan suburb was the eclectic mix of transported convict, corrupt politician, unethical businessman, immoral servant of the Crown, hard-nosed criminal, female gossip, talented tradesman and struggling family unit.

Carefree, hardworking, hard-drinking, the latter – the men and women in the engine room – were the backbone. Many of Irish or Scottish extraction, along with their twinkling eyes they brought to Australia their craftsmanship, songs, culture, energy, enthusiasm and philosophy of a shared space and it was the combination of these things that saw the blossoming of intricate, neat, tidy, well-constructed terraces along a labyrinth of narrow streets.

According to social historian Max Kelly who captured the rich day-to-day life of the early Paddingtonian, Paddington prospered at the height of Sydney's first real estate boom in the late 1830s. Land and house prices soared but it was the drinking holes that fared best of all.

The Sussex Arms, the Britannia, the Rose and Crown, the Londonderry, the Rifle Butts, the Colonel Bloomfield's Arms, the United Service and Cross Guns, the mere shanties and grog shops.<sup>53</sup>

The Oddfellows and the Union were amongst the most popular but the Greenwood Tree<sup>54</sup>, the Coachman's Arms<sup>55</sup> and the Paddington were particular favourites of the "establishment". At the Paddington Inn, the twenty-five-year-old proprietor – an attractive widow by the name of Jane Beard – was the main attraction. At weekends crowds came by the bus loads to meet her. A fact, in itself, that suggests 'being social' – going to the pub for a few pints – may have been as important as going to church.

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<sup>53</sup> Kelly in *Paddock Full of Houses*, 140.

<sup>54</sup> This hotel was situated directly opposite the Barracks.

<sup>55</sup> This hotel was situated a little further up Old South Head Road.

In the pub men vented their spleen. The target of their angst was the heartless establishment. After I feed and clothe the wife and kids and pay the mortgage I am bhail bhris<sup>56</sup>; 'I've less money than a frog's feather.'<sup>57</sup> The complaint was spoken in such a way as to make the barman wilt like a violet. Cynical jesting and bawdy laughter followed as tears over the the miserable wage packet were drowned in liquid amber.

Father Birch – being well-acquainted with his parishioners' employer bashing, drinking and fondness for the good yarn – made them pay for their sins. If he ran into them in the street he'd give them a tongue lashing that made them feel as if they had been smacked across the head with a shillelagh<sup>58</sup>. If they managed to escape the priest's blow in the streets he'd hurl fire and brimstone from the pulpit. 'You lousy, rotten, ungrateful wretches, you are well on yer way to roasting in hell' he'd scream.'

The little children suffered abuse on all fronts. In the home they copped it from their drunken fathers. In the pew they copped it from the priest. In the classroom they copped it from the nuns and brothers who were always at the ready to belt the Bejasus out of anyone who didn't know their 5 x tables.<sup>59</sup> 'You flaming dunce' was the catchcry.

Grabbed by the earlobes. Marched to the corner. Walloped with a rattan cane. Forced to wear a cone-shaped cap. In the afternoons, victims of the abuse gathered together under one of the giant figs where they'd play knuckle bones,

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<sup>56</sup> Irish word meaning 'broke, penniless'.

<sup>57</sup> Kelly in *Paddock Full of Houses*, 192. 'On fifty bob a week, with a wife and five kids, a man was scratching himself to keep his head above water,' 194.

<sup>58</sup> Believed to have originated in the village and barony of Shillelagh, County Wicklow, and traditionally made from blackthorn (sloe) wood or oak, the shillelagh (shi-lay-lee) has a long and rich history. Originally it was used for settling disputes in a gentlemanly manner, the knotty club, which was often filled with lead, has also been smeared with butter or lard and placed up chimneys to cure and used for self-defense and the martial arts. Horace maintained his childhood connections with the Irish people. A treasured piece of Lindrum memorabilia is a shillelagh presented to Horace on one of his many visits to Ireland.

<sup>59</sup> Kelly in *Paddock Full of Houses*, 192.

listen to the clip, clop of passing horses hooves, the pow-pow-ker-pow of gunfire from the barracks and the sometimes tinkle of rain on shingled roof tops. On occasion they pulled branches from the trees, imagined them as rifles and marched like soldiers, caking their bare feet in the mud.

Aside from government business and the business that was transacted in public houses, chief industries included ribbon weaving, boot making, tailoring, dressmaking, hat making, baking, the manufacture of soda water, confectionary, soap, coaches, furniture and saddles, tanning, butchery and brewing. Brewing was probably the most successful industry as an insatiable thirst had gripped the colony. By 1890, for example, 'Marshall's Brewery was producing 600 hogsheads (as well as a very large quantity of ale and porter per week)'<sup>60</sup> and, throughout the day and into the night, the roadways were alive with the sound of 'bullock trains hauling their loads of gin.'<sup>61</sup>

Corner stores (which could be found on just about every corner) were another hive of activity and they were a critical element in the flowering of an emerging community spirit. For the women of Paddington, gossiping was more important than stocking the larder and there was plenty to gossip about. 'Did you hear about the doctor on the corner of Oxford and Queen? Terrible business. Judge found him guilty of cutting off a boy's whistle.

'I did hear that story, my dear, I didn't believe it when it was told to me the first time around. What about the father of three hung last week for slitting his daughter's throats. Fancy a father doing a dreadful thing like that. Pressure must have got to him. His poor, poor wife!'

'I met her not so long ago. She was a sweet woman. If my memory serves me correctly she came from the North of England.'

And so it went.

The gossipers – male and female – came from all walks of life.

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<sup>60</sup> Kelly in *Paddock Full of Houses*, 140.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 166.

Produce merchants, water carriers, wheelwrights, plasterers, quarrymen, fencers, coachbuilders, blacksmiths, turnkeys, dairymen...and Mary Mitchell the local midwife, [they] all contributed to the rapid development of Paddington.<sup>62</sup>

Local identities included:

pork butcher Nora Hall, stovemaker Bill Hughes, music store owner Robert Crooks, George Jacobson who managed the Kooloo Tea Company, organ builder Charles Richardson, Frederick Williams who dyed ostrich feathers for ladies of fashion, picture framer James Gleeson, Mr. Tremlett who ran the Paddington Marble Works, Mrs. Power the milliner, Mr. Power the carpenter, George Marshall who ran the oyster saloon, Mrs. Drabble who ran one of Sydney's five "massage establishments", the clothes prop seller, who staggered along under a load of trimmed saplings on his shoulder shouting "Sixpence a pair" – the Bottle-ohs – one-armed Dan and Raggedy Bill – who pulled a small dray, their poor red raw chests pressing on the crossbar of the shafts, sweating and stinking to high heaven.

Not to be forgotten:

Old Jimmy Powell the lamplighter, the Broken Biscuit man, Abby Symond who ran the hock shop where the faithful on Mondays would be waiting their turn to go through the side door into two little compartments (something like a confessional) where they would beg and plead for an extra bob on a suit or watch, Nosey Bob the hangman, the Cockeyed tailor and Fishbones and a lot whose nicknames long forgotten. God rest their souls, poor benighted buggers.<sup>63</sup>

This great mix of labour and skill ensured Paddingtonian needs were met. Medical, dental, legal, everything from music lessons and performances of "Poor Little Nell" to steel-rimmed glasses, furs, spuds and stewing chops. Fresh rabbits from the Rabbitman at ninepence a pair. Milk from 'a fly-by-night milkman at tuppence a quart. (The hungry and needy waiting on the kerbside

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<sup>62</sup> Kelly in *Paddock Full of Houses*, 194.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 194.

in the lane to buy the skim).'<sup>64</sup> Honey from the Honeyman who either gave the spoon a hearty lick himself or offered it to child willing to do it for him.

If you needed to travel, you caught the bus. Driven by a clay-smoking female, the omnibus was the principal form of transportation into and out of the village until the steam train came along. That didn't happen until 1881 and, when it did, the following post from the *Sydney Morning Herald Centennial Supplement*, 17 January, 1888 suggests there was still quite a bit of competition between the bus and the train:

It was amusing, sometimes, when the tram, owing to greasy rails would get stuck on the Hill. The bus would struggle past, loaded with lads coming home from work, the boys jeering at the halted tram as the engine-driver made frantic efforts to get the wheels to grip. No love was lost between the trams and busmen, the bus driver always trying beat the 'puffing billy' on the run home.<sup>65</sup>

Economic down-turn triggered Paddington's decline.<sup>66</sup>

The property bubble burst in the late nineteenth century and abject misery took hold. Before it happened, moneymen had already taken their trunks of cash and mortgages and abandoned the suburb to invest elsewhere.

Stripped of assets and income, the destitute went to the jail. Those who managed to cling on took up residence in boarding houses, joined soup kitchen queues and were counted amongst the poorest in Sydney's depression society.

Horace's early years, growing up in a slum where beggars bartered their clothes to the proprietor of the gin shop and stiffs queued at the Pig & Whistle for a porcelain bowl of trip and onions, were very strange and, looking back, he

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<sup>64</sup> Kelly in *Paddock Full of Houses*, 194.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 172.

<sup>66</sup> The downturn appears to have coincided with the opening of the Paddington Town Hall in 1891.

felt he missed a great many of the joys of childhood. His home was surrounded by the crazy whirl of the theatre; the sole means of putting bread on the table; and, rehearsals and performances and rehearsals and performances, meant little time for traditional family life.

Morrell's Dixieland Jazz Band – the very first Dixieland jazz band to be heard in Australia – was topping the bills. His mother was a very fine pianist and she managed the affairs of the band. She was also fabulously extravagant; changing her gowns at least six or seven times during every performance.

It was said many times that his father was 'Quite a Card'. Billed as the 'singing drummer', he could play several instruments and enjoyed a stellar reputation for his performances of popular favourites like "Jazz Baby"<sup>67</sup>, "Look for the Silver Lining"<sup>68</sup> and "I wish I could Shimmy like my Sister Kate"<sup>69</sup>. He inherited his passion for theatre from his mother. Her name was Mable Staunton and Mable was a jack of all trades. Most artists were in those days. Singer, actress, Penny Farthing cyclist. She'd appear as Mable on stage and Dot on the big wheel.

Horace's father was also a fine swimmer and a member of the Surf Life Saving movement. His approach to life was light-hearted and gay but he could be a hard taskmaster as Horace was to find out when his father caught him riding on the running boards of a Sydney tram. He couldn't sit down for a week after the wallop his father delivered with a leather strap.

As the jazz band became in greater demand, Horace was left more and more to his own devices. He spent hours reading about ships and distant lands, consuming geography as a hungry wolf and became so preoccupied with his

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<sup>67</sup> Composed by Blanche Merrill and M. K. Jerome (1919). In 1926 the rights were acquired by Wheaties cereal for use as an advertising jingle. The song was reviewed in original form and context for the motion picture *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (1967).

<sup>68</sup> Composed by Clarence Williams and Armand Piron (1919), believed to be derived from a bawdy tune by Louis Armstrong about murdered brothel madam, Kate Townsend.

<sup>69</sup> Music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by B. C. DeSylva (1919), written for the unsuccessful musical *Zip, Goes a Million*. Popularised in 1920 and popularised by Marilyn Miller in the musical *Sally*.

ambition to travel that it came as something of a shock when he first learned travelling to distant lands wasn't going to be quite as easy as jumping on a magic carpet. He was also shocked to learn things weren't going well between his parents. After that awareness kicked in, he found himself crawling deeper and deeper into his shell away from what became a very disagreeable and discordant atmosphere. The whole business was a mystery to him for a long while and only as he got older did he learn the truth of the story that hit the headlines in 1926. It was a story so fantastic that he left it as a skeleton to be pulled from the cupboard by another when the time was right.

Insofar as school was concerned, Horace wasn't a star pupil. He played truant more than once or twice to go fishing and read.

One of the most pleasant memories he had of his young days was when his uncles Frederick and Walter came to Sydney and, without any warning or explanation, he found himself journeying back to Melbourne with them. Snuggled against his uncle Walter's coat, his eyes heavy with sleep, he surveyed his uncle Frederick sitting opposite him. He was puffing on his pipe and Horace was moved by the kindness in his eyes.

His experiences in Melbourne were happy and sad. He missed his Mum dreadfully and the news of his Auntie Florence's death came only a short time after his arrival. His grandmother took that news very badly. She went into mourning and it was years before she gave up the black.

Auntie Florence died giving birth to her second child, a little girl, Irene May Dunn. His grandmother travelled to South Australia to bring the little girl home. The little girl's brother, William (Billy) Dunn, was left with his father, Percy Henry Dunn. Percy was not welcome in the Lindrum household. He was a staunch trade unionist and Horace's grandparents believed their daughter had married beneath her station. William (Billy) joined the Lindrum household much later.

Horace's grandmother was a woman of many fine qualities. However, her forthright approach to life was sometimes as cold as steel and he often felt that his presence was on sufferance. He wasn't the only one who felt that way. The children were well fed and well-dressed but there were no cuddles from grandmother, only polite greetings.

Cousin Irene became known as Dolly and she was more of a daughter than a granddaughter. She took her mother's place in grandmother's heart.

To say grandmother spoilt Dolly would be an understatement. Everything a child could possibly want was bestowed upon her, but – when it came to her brother – it was an entirely different story. William remained Billy Dunn and he was treated as an errand boy. During the Second World War he served in the army and had the terrible misfortune to be imprisoned in Changi. Even this episode failed to bring him closer to his grandmother. He was always an 'outsider' in the Lindrum house.

Horace started studying the art of billiards whilst he was in Melbourne. He was coached a little at first by his grandfather, usually when there was a gap in play on one of the twenty tables in the billiard room and remembered meeting some of the old stars, including John Roberts Jnr. His uncles worshipped the ground John Roberts walked on. Walter told him that he saw Roberts play when he was a mere boy and what he saw was an education and an inspiration, for 'Roberts was a genius at whose feet he was proud to have sat'. Roberts was an incredible technician. He was also a showman. Horace's grandfather had no idea of turning his grandson into a professional let alone a great wizard like Roberts and, indeed, Horace was soon left to his own devices. He was about twelve or thirteen when he began, on his own initiative, to practise seriously. He used to try to model his play on that of his uncle Frederick and later improved it on Willie Smith's when he saw him play in Australia. Willie had a pair of perfect eyes and his cue action was beyond

criticism. He wasn't the showman that Roberts was, but he played a very varied game and was a fascinating player to watch.

When Horace's mother eventually returned to bring him home, he was already proving himself a capable addition to the line of Lindrum champions and, on the September 12, 1933, she suggested he execute a change of name by deed poll. Horace thought that was a good idea as everybody knew him as Horace Lindrum anyway and he referred to himself as Horace Lindrum. He was proud of his connection with the great Lindrums but – without a shred of conceit – felt he would have scored the same successes if his name had been Brown or Smith and it would certainly have saved him from the many pin-pricks directed towards him over the years.

'You're not really a Lindrum, are you!'

'How come your name comes to be Lindrum when Lindrum was your mother's maiden name?'

'It must be a great advantage to be called "Lindrum".'

'Were you adopted into the Lindrum family?'

He used to ask himself: 'Where does all this come from?'

He never did find out.

The day Clara opened the letter from the Department of Health advising the results of a blood test taken at the time of Horace's birth she was so shocked she drowned her sorrows in Society tea. The full implications of the test would not be understood by Horace at least till many years later. For now, I'll let that momentous knowledge wait until further in my narrative. Two days after receiving that awful news Clara caught Morrell having it off with the hussy in Number 10. That was the straw that broke the camel's back. She went home, packed his bags and threw them into the street. Big Horace continued to float in and out of her life until Horace was nine years old; then he disappeared until 1957.

A man of sound mind may have felt some sort of remorse for being caught in the act. Not Morrell. He just picked up his bits and pieces and moved on to the next set of vacant loins. He didn't give a fig for Clara and the boy he had sired. It may have given Clara hope knowing that her own mother had survived the stigma of sole parenthood but Clara and her mother lived in societies that viewed sole parents as one might view the tea leaves in the bottom of a cup. It hadn't been easy for Clara growing up in a house of boy champions in an era when women felt the need to die for the feminist cause.<sup>70</sup> All Clara had been expected to do was throw her body under the body of a respectable man. For someone with Clara's fierce ambition to succeed on her own account that was an intolerable expectation. Wasn't she the one Paderewski identified as 'The genius of the family!'

Survival meant hard work. She wrote music, taught dancing, played piano, knitted socks for the Comforts Fund, took in mending and alterations, tended her baby and, for relaxation, read the adventures of Birtles & Ferguson<sup>71</sup> and the works of Australia's first literary treasure, Charlotte Atkinson<sup>72</sup>. It didn't help that her father had stopped talking to her. To rub salt into the wound, he put Big Horace on the Lindrum payroll. But things are not always what they seem. This will become clearer in good time but that's how Morrell got to stand with my great-grandfather, my two great-uncles and my dad in a press photo. I took a pair of scissors and cut him out of the frame.

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<sup>70</sup> On June 04, 1913, Emily Wilding Davison threw herself under the King's horse at the Epsom Derby. She died four days later.

<sup>71</sup> Described in an article in the Barrier Daily Truth, Tuesday 15 April, 1914 as "One of the greatest adventure stories in motoring history. Two men in a "Brush" and a dog called "Rex", is the story of a famous adventure undertaken by long-distance cycling champion Francis Birtles and driving enthusiast Sid Ferguson who travelled from Freemantle to Sydney in March / April 1912. in a one-cylinder 10 horsepowerd 'Brush' runabout manufactured in Detroit 1910. Sponsored by Canada Cycle and Motor Company and Dunlop Tyre Company, Birtles and Ferguson were the first to undertake the arduous trip across the wild Australian bush.

<sup>72</sup> Charlotte Atkinson nee Barton was the author of Australia's earliest known children's book. *A Mother's Offering to Her Children* by a Lady, Long Resident in New South Wales, Sydney, Gazette, 1841, The text reflects on the high value and importance of family dialogue.

The days and months came and went as if they had never existed.  
Then came the terrible news that Archduke Ferdinand had been assassinated in Sarajevo.

August 1, 1914.

John Wren didn't go to war. He enlisted but the enlistment was a ploy to get fourteen-year-old boys who had never been to the barber to offer up their lives for the nation.

*'The Bulletin'*<sup>73</sup>  
November 25, 1914.

Please don't. This is no laughing matter. John Wren went on a 16-mile route march the other day and now has varicose veins or something and won't be able to go to Gallipoli. He's just a miserable lucre-loving trafficker in the temple.  
FULL BLOODY STOP!

Wren's rhetoric lent weight to the Prime Minister's pleas for a referendum on conscription and, as Lieutenant Colonel Peter McGuinness says:

'They marched them down to Woolloomooloo in single file, impossible to march otherwise on account of the crowd, took about two hours to get there, embarked on ferry steamers which conveyed them to their ships, were fixed up with their quarters and then went on deck to see swarms of small boats with

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<sup>73</sup> Australia's longest running magazine. The Bulletin was started by J. F. Archibald and John Haynes. The first issue was published in 1880 and the final issue in January, 2008. In the early years the magazine comprised political commentary, sensationalised news stories and Australian literature; featuring the works of many writers and poets, including Dorothea Mackellar, Banjo Paterson, Henry Lawson, Mary Gilmore and C. J. Dennis. The magazine played a significant role in the encouragement and circulation of nationalist/Republican sentiments – Australia for Australians and Australia for the white man – remaining an influential and controversial publication far into the 20th century.

friends encircling the ship, saying goodbye. Steamed out at 4.00pm amidst great noise from the surrounding ships and ferries'<sup>74</sup> as they sailed towards what Bea Miles<sup>75</sup> called a grand strategical blunder. The consequences that flowed from that monumental gaffe spread far wider than the Dardanelles.

Germans who had pledged their allegiance to Australia were spat at, dismissed from their jobs, imprisoned and/or forced to change their names. Hence, 'Von Lindrum' became just plain 'Lindrum' and the history of the Lindrum family was buried in a tin the size of a rectangular money box.

Horace was three years old at the commencement of World War I, he was six when Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer gave the order to raise rifles and point them at the exit gates. Seconds later, Gurkhas and Sikhs under Dyer's command – some standing, some kneeling on one knee – raised their .303 Enfields and opened fire on their own people. Three months later Lenin ordered the slaughter of the Russian Czar, his wife, children, servants and family dog.

After that, woolly caps and fingerless mittens prepared for Armaggedon, preaching chapter 3 of the second Epistle of St. Paul, verses 1-8.

'This know also in the last days, perilous times shall come.  
For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous boasters,  
proud blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.  
Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers,  
despisers, of those who are good. Traitors, heady high-minded  
lovers of pleasures...lustful...never able to come to the knowledge  
of truth.'

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<sup>74</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Peter McGuinness MBE, RFD, ED (Retired), *Boldly and Faithfully, The Journal: The Official History of the Australian Imperial Force March 1915-October 1918*, (1/19 RNSWR Association Incorporating 2/19 Australian Infantry Battalion, A.I.F. Association, 2011), page 15.

<sup>75</sup> An 'Iconic eccentric', Beatrice Miles (1902-1973) was known for her outrageous and disruptive conduct in public places, outspoken criticism of political and social authority, altercations with taxi drivers and famous performances of the Bard in exchange for money and goods.

Poverty – war – family upheaval – anxiety in relation to the potential collapse of a world he was only just coming to know, Horace's youth was infused with dread on the one hand and an inner belief in self on the other.

'Mummy, will you please tie my laces?'

Clara bent down and tied her son's shoestrings.

'I love you, Mummy.'

'Do you now.'

'Yes, Mummy, I love you because you dress me and feed me and take care of me.'

'Thank goodness you are not yet a man' Clara thought, her mind travelling to the news on the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the photo of teenagers boarding the ghost train looming large.

'Now, off you go.' She kissed Horace on the cheek, turned him around and directed him through the school gate. He gave her a smile and a wave and she watched and waited until he disappeared from view.

Horace was a pupil at the Sacred Heart primary school in Darlinghurst. He was not a Catholic and it was unusual in those days for a non-Catholic to be permitted entry to a Catholic school but Clara had developed strong ties with the Irish Catholics in the area and the local priest and the nuns turned a blind eye. In his manhood, Horace did not align himself with one religious sect, he believed in a Supreme Being and adopted Gandhi's philosophy, 'I am a Christian, I am a Muslim, I am a Jew, I am a Buddhist.....'

War over, Pauline Cohan and her Bottom Wigglers hit Sydney in 1921. 'We're looking for a pianist. He or she has got to be good,' Cohan told Opera Australia. 'Clara Lindrum can play anything you throw at her. Why don't you give her a go?'

A member of Nellie Melba's Sock-knitting for the Comforts Fund Patriotic Circle, Clara had made quite a name for herself playing request programmes in the Town Halls for International opera stars<sup>76</sup>, Galli Curci and Toti Dal Monte, who were engaged in Melba's touring company. Cohan accepted the recommendation and caused her secretary to pen the following letter:

Dear Miss Lindrum,

Pauline Cohan has asked me to write to you. We are looking for a pianist for our new show. You come highly recommended...

Clara could not believe her good fortune. 'Thank you, Miss Cohan,' she whispered kissing the note then racing to the jam jar where she kept her savings. Twenty-four shillings and eleven pence, enough for an imported corset, dress, hat and overcoat. Clara had already fallen in love with 'the hat'. In fact, she'd spent the last few weekends glued to the front window of the local milliner's shop. Now she sat imagining the work of art on her head. A snazzy cream number, it had a wide band of navy blue silk drawn into a huge bow at the left-hand side secured with a bunch of bright pink cherries. 'Delicious! I will make a name for myself in that hat,' she giggled. Then she remembered the appointment she'd made for young Horace to have his hair cut.

Nine years old, Horace was about to experience a metamorphosis from Gainsborough's *Blue Boy*<sup>77</sup> to short back and sides. On the same afternoon he was caught by the ear lobes for stealing ice cream. The proprietor of Peter's

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<sup>76</sup> Amongst others, Clara played for Amelita Galli Curci – Curci was under contract to the Victor Talking Machine Company – and Toti Dal Monte – Monte was engaged to the famous tenor, Enzo de Muro Lomanto. Dal Monte eventually married Lomanto in an extravagant ceremony at St. Mary's Cathedral over which the Cardinal himself presided.

<sup>77</sup> Oil on canvas painted by artist Thomas Gainsborough (c. 1770), the *Blue Boy* is said to be a portrait of Jonathan Buttall (1752-1825), the son of a wealthy hardware merchant. The painting is held at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California.

reported him shimmying up the drainpipe of the West Street terrace, a plastic bucket in one hand and a spoon in the other, climbing through the window and scooping Neapolitan from the makeshift die.<sup>78</sup>

Pumping on a pedal seven nights a week didn't leave Clara with much time for anything else.

Victor Lindley arrived on the scene mid-way through 1923.

Sydney, September 13, 1924.

Horace was twelve years old when Clara married Victor at the Church of Christ in Petersham. The sole pictorial record is a photo taken inside the church. Clara looks as if she has been plucked from the chorus of Leslie Stuart's *Florodora*.<sup>79</sup> Bathed in silk tulle, the cream-coloured flapper-esque lace dress with its dropped waist and tea-length hemline suited her to a T. Lindley wore pin-stripes. A barley-twist watch-chain dripped from the pocket of his waistcoat. At 193 centimetres, he commanded attention. The Reverend Reginald Provan Arnott stood on an elevated platform to the right of the couple. Nobody gave reason why the pair should not be joined.

After the wedding the bridal party retreated to the Oxford Hall for refreshments. Around ten-thirty, Clara, Lindley and best man Douglas Birrell took their leave.

'What a bloody awful night,' Birrell said as they dashed to the car.

The ants were swarming and you could feel the southerly bluster on its way.

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<sup>78</sup> Peters' ice cream company was established by American expatriate Frederick (Fred) Augustus Bolles in Paddington in 1907 under the trading name 'Peters' American Delicacy Company'.

<sup>79</sup> Based on the book by Jimmy Davis which was published under the pseudonym Owen Hall, *Florodora* was an Edwardian musical comedy; one of the first successful Broadway musicals of the 20th century; music by Leslie Stuart additional songs by Paul Rubens and lyrics by Edward Boyd-Jones. First performed when the iron curtain was raised at the Lyric on Shaftesbury Avenue, London, in 1899, the song "Tell me Pretty Maiden" was a big hit.

‘Another ten minutes and I reckon’ she’ll be pelting down,’ Birrell continued jumping in the back. Lindley nodded, settled Clara into the front seat and cranked the engine. They didn’t get far. A few streets at best before Birrell leaned forward.

‘What did I tell you. Here she blows.’

Again, Lindley nodded. He didn’t like driving in the rain and the rain was now bucketing down.

‘Wow! that wind is really something.’

Lindley had to work hard to keep the car from veering to the wrong side of the road.

‘I can’t see a bloody thing,’ he told Clara as he wrenched the car into second gear.

‘Take it slow, love.’

‘The lighting is so poor down this end of town. I’m going to pull over and adjust the lamps.’

‘You’ll get drenched.’

‘Christ almighty,’ he shrieked as he pushed at the door, the wind whipping at his face.

Thunder rolled overhead, he lost his grip and the door slammed shut.

‘That was a beauty,’ he said to himself, watching Clara’s reaction through the windscreen.

He managed to adjust the light on the left without too much difficulty but the wires on the right headlight had come loose and he couldn’t get them to connect.

‘Damn it,’ he said to himself, ‘we’ve only got one light.’

‘Look at you. You’re soaked to the skin,’ Clara observed as Lindley climbed back into the front seat. He looked and smelled like a wet labrador.

Birrell offered to have a go.

‘Best wait a bit mate.’

A terrific clap of thunder saw Clara throw her hands onto her ears and sink further down in her seat.

'It's only thunder, Duckey,' Lindley comforted.

'I am not too keen on thunder,' she mumbled.

Giant pieces of ice were now hitting the bonnet.

'That hail is the size of golf balls. I hope you don't get too much damage to the paintwork, Lindley. We haven't had a storm like this one for as long as I can remember.' Birrell's words saw a fork of lightning tear from the ground, sizzle and rip through the cloud cover.

'Spectacular. I wish we had a camera.'

Neither Lindley nor Clara shared Birrell's enthusiasm.

'As soon as it eases, I am going out again.'

Lindley was shivering so badly now his jaw was trembling. 'I'll have another go at connecting the light and then I'll crank her up again.'

The journey down Macquarie Street was painfully slow. It had stopped raining but sections of the road were blocked due to flooding and a thick mist was rolling in. To make matters worse, the wipers weren't working properly so Lindley was forced to steer with his right hand and use his left to push the rubbers backwards and forwards. Next, the front wheel got stuck in a large pothole.

'Hell!' Lindley slammed the car into reverse and pushed his foot hard onto the accelerator. The whirring noise told him it would take more than acceleration to get the car out.

'I best take a look.'

'You're going to catch your death,' Clara harped.

'I'm soaked already, it's not going to make any difference.'

'Well, at least put this blanket around you.' She pulled a picnic rug from the back seat. Seconds later, Lindley, draped in the blanket, his torso caked in mud, came to the window.

‘Sorry, mate, I’m going to need your help. You take the wheel and I’ll push.’

Birrell clambered into the front.

‘When I yell “foot down”, slam her into reverse and give her all you’ve got.’

A few seconds later:

‘Okay, Birrell, foot down.’

The engine laboured and the wheel dug deeper into the mud.

‘Damn it!’ Lindley exclaimed, slamming the flat of his hand on the bonnet for a second time.

‘We need something to jack her up and we’ll have to go gently so we don’t damage the suspension.’

It took them near on an hour to get the car out. By that time, Lindley could feel a virus coming on. His immune system wasn’t strong at the best of times. The weather finally eased as they came into the Parramatta Road. A few minutes past midnight Victor Lindley killed Robert Walker and seriously injured two other men near the intersection of Johnson Street. Birrell was to tell the court:

‘I estimate we were travelling at about twenty miles per hour. I saw three men a few yards ahead of us, trying to cross the road. One of them looked as if he had been drinking for he was swaying all over the place. The car swerved and there was a jolt.

I must have been knocked unconscious because all I can remember after that is waking up in the hospital with a broken cheekbone and a dislocated jaw.’

According to Lindley, he swerved to avoid a collision with another vehicle. He told the Magistrate he slammed his foot on the brake and the car mounted the footpath and came to a stop short of somebody’s front wall.

‘I got out and, to my horror, found three men lying unconscious on and near the tram lines. I looked for the other vehicle but it had disappeared. At the time, I had no idea whether I had hit the other vehicle or whether the other vehicle had hit my vehicle nor did I know which vehicle had hit the men. I was in such a state of shock

and simply did not know what to do. I remembered something about not moving an injured person and this thought was running through my mind. I cried out for help but nobody came so I ran to the nearest house and started yelling and banging on the front door. A light came on and a fellow opened up. He was holding a stack of blankets and told me he was coming to help.

I returned to the car. Clara was hysterical, so I shook her and told her she needed to calm down. Next I checked on Douglas. He was unconscious and clearly in need of medical help so I decided to drive to the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. On arrival at the hospital, I ran straight into the emergency department and cried out for help. Douglas was subsequently admitted and two ambulances dispatched to the scene. The rest is history.'

The Prosecutor at the committal hearing was all warrior and he knew how to read a jury.

'Mr. Lindley, had you been drinking?'

The Prosecutor's eyes, hard, cold as the ice at the summit of Everest.

'No, Sir.'

'Mmmmmm. A dry wedding!'

A cynical tone. 'Surely you can't expect this honourable court to believe you did not consume some liquid refreshment at your own wedding?'

'Starkey ginger beer, Sir'.

'Starkey ginger beer! Are you sure it wasn't Jamaica Green?'

A rattle-snake change in direction.

'What do you say about the blood on the bonnet of your car?'

Lindley responded quickly.

'I did not know about the blood on the bonnet of my car until Sergeant Mackay told me there was blood on the bonnet of my car.'

'You didn't hear the thud, thud, thud when you hit the victims?'

'I don't believe my vehicle hit the victims.'

'Do you have a hearing problem, Mr. Lindley?'

'No, Sir, I do not.'

'Were your senses impaired by the hair of the goat?'

'No, Sir, they were not.'

'Mmmm!'

A long pause.

'The other vehicle?'

'Yes, Sir.'

'Tell me about the other vehicle.'

Lindley explained it all happened so quickly and he couldn't remember the colour or the model of the other vehicle so the prosecutor put it to him that there was no other vehicle, he had been driving in a manner dangerous and, whilst one should never speculate, the likely case scenario was his senses had been impaired by the hair of the goat. Lindley's solicitor strenuously objected to that allegation.

The objection was sustained. Ethel Thorneycroft of 85 O'Connor Street, Haberfield informed the court she had been returning home from the theatre when she saw a car pass at high speed. A few minutes later there was an awful thud, thud, thud. On being asked to assess the speed of the vehicle, she said it must have been travelling at least thirty five miles an hour because it skidded, burning rubber on the roadway and there was a terrible screech of brake before it mounted the footpath.

Unexpectedly, she turned to Lindley and screamed:

'You're a murderer. You were going too fast. You killed that poor man.'

At this outburst, the magistrate slammed his gavel onto the bench.

'Madam, you will keep your opinions to yourself. The jury will disregard the last statement.' Turning to the court reporter, he ordered: 'Strike that statement from the record.' The reporter nodded, pushed her glasses up her nose and scrubbed out the words with her graphite.

Later, council worker, Thomas Leonard Day of Leichhardt, told his version of the events. He said he had been sweeping the roadway when the accident occurred. He heard a terrible thud, saw a body fly up into the air and then fall like a stone. The vehicle skidded fifty yards before it finally came to stop. He had written the registration number down on a cigarette packet. 14205. He produced the piece of paper and held it up for all to see. A murmur swept the courtroom and Day waited for it to pass before continuing with his evidence. Minutes earlier he had seen three men attempting to cross Parramatta Road. They were shaky on their legs and swaying all over the place. He thought they must have been smashed.

The Prosecutor quickly intervened.

‘But you can’t possibly know whether or not the pedestrians had been drinking, can you, Mr. Day?’

‘Well...’

‘Can you, Mr. Day?’

Reluctantly, Day conceded he could not say for certain.

‘Did you see any other vehicles on the road?’ the Prosecutor continued.

‘No, Sir, I did not.’

Day had heard the driver’s cries for help and, within a short time, neighbours from around the district were tending the injured men and redirecting traffic from the scene. The driver had disappeared.

‘Did I hear you correctly, Mr. Day? The driver had left the scene of the accident?’

‘Yes, Sir.’

Francis Joseph Smith, rubber worker of Matraville, was not fit to appear at the committal proceedings. He was still unconscious in the hospital. At the trial he denied the drunkenness. He told the Judge:

‘Me Lord, we was perfectly sober.’

Alfred Ephraim Mitchell – his iron-moulder friend who had been out to the world in the bed next to him during the preliminaries – backed up the story. Constable Littlefair gave his summary of events.

‘It is alleged, your Worship, that at approximately 12-30 am on the morning of September 14, 1924 said defendant drove his vehicle along Parramatta Road in a manner dangerous and did occasion grievous bodily harm, running down three men, killing one and seriously injuring the other two and that he did leave the scene of the accident. We estimate that the vehicle was travelling at more than thirty miles an hour. Twenty over the speed limit.’

Lindley was committed for trial on a charge that he did:

‘On Sunday September 14, 1924 feloniously and maliciously murder one Robert Walker and cause grievous bodily harm to Alfred Mitchell and Frank Smith.’

Mr. Jennings then heard an application for bail. Bail was set at five hundred pounds. Thankful he was free to go and relieved to hear Mitchell and Smith had regained consciousness, Lindley was far from happy about the publicity poor Clara was receiving. Headlines like:

‘Jazz Baby – charged with Bigamy and ‘On cue for conviction!’ were splattered across the front page of the *‘Sydney Morning Herald’*.

They say there is a reason for everything in life. The Lindley case led to Horace’s removal to Victoria.

Clara had her own legal problems to deal with. Her bigamy case came before the courts a few weeks later. There she stands, I like to imagine, solemnly answering the judge’s questions, attempting to maintain her Lindrum dignity.

‘State your name.’

‘Clara Violet Lindrum.’

‘I don’t suppose you could be related to?’ Mr. Jennings S.M. asked.

'Yes, your Honour.'

'Oh, my, my. Can you play billiards, my dear?'

'No, your Honour. I play the piano.'

The Prosecutor gave a little 'Ah-hum', to remind his Honour that he was in the court room not the billiard room.

It is alleged that:

'On Saturday September 13, 1924, said defendant, Clara Violet Morrell nee Lindrum, married Victor Lindley, at the Church of Christ in Petersham. Her husband, Horace Staunton Morrell, to whom she was married in 1911, being alive.'

Under cross-examination, Morrell informed the court that he had only lived with his wife for a short time. There was a child of the union but he did not support him. The Jazz band was the common thread; Clara being a pianist and he being a tympanist and tympanists were hard to find. The defendant reserved her defence and was committed for trial. Messrs. Abigail & Millar warned her not to speak to the press. Before Clara's case came to trial she learned that Lindley had been acquitted. The trial took a terrible toll on Horace. On October 20, 1926 he wrote:

Dear Mum,

Just a few lines hoping you are well and not worrying. I suppose you know that you get nothing from worrying. I am writing to tell you that I am in the fittest condition and I am wearing a smile even though Mr. Millar has been in to see me since he came back from seeing you and tells me you are looking very tired and feeling worried, the latter which I keep telling you not to do. Do you know when your case will be on Mum? Please write soon and, don't forget – WIN OR LOSE – come home with a SMILE. Well, I have to wear my grey suit now because my black one is worn out and, just the other day, I made breaks of 108, 123 and 125. This is all the news at present.

From your loving son,  
The Marbles Champion of New South Wales

PS: Grandpa backed Manfred to win the Caulfield Cup.

About the same time, Horace wrote to his father. The letter is dated February 23. The handwriting suggests a strong level of hurt and anger. The ink is heavy.

Dear Mr. Morrell,

Just a few lines to let you know that I do not wish to recognize you as my father on account of the way you have treated Mum. If you was any decent father you would have written a letter to show respect as I used to have for you.

My opinion about you is that you are a coward when you want to fight a lady in the street. But still you know it comes to those who wait.

From the one who is never going to be a drunkard.

Horace

PS: I forgot to tell you something, I am never going to be a lady-chaser either.

Eighteen months passed before Clara's case came to trial. His Honour, Mr. Justice Davidson presided. Mr. Mead appeared for the prosecution. Mr. E. R. Abigail for the defence. Called over by ballot, the jurymen answered to their names.

Leaning on the bar table, Mead turned the pages of his brief as a mother turns the pages of a fairytale. He then moved to the jury box to deliver his opening address. A Cicero of the first order, he had served his profession with distinction for many years and had recently taken silk.

Gentlemen of the jury, the defendant is indicted for having committed the offence of bigamy, that, whilst still married she knowingly married another man, one Victor Lindley, on the September 13, 1924. This is the kind of heinous act that serves to corrupt the moral fibre of decent society and must not go unpunished.

Clara had written in her affidavit:

I, Clara Violet Morrell nee Lindrum, being duly sworn make oath and say, as follows:

1. I am the defendant in these proceedings.
2. I was married to Horace Staunton Morrell on the October 09, 1911 at St. Bartholomew's Church, Pyrmont near Sydney in the state of New South Wales, according to the rites of the Church of England.
3. There is issue of the marriage, one child to wit, Horace Morrell, aged thirteen years.
4. At the time of and prior to my marriage to Mr. Morrell, my mother had a shop at Glenmore Road in Paddington and Morrell used to frequent the shop, constantly coming in and asking me to go out with him, but I wasn't keen at all and I made my position clear to him. Further, my mother refused him permission to take me out.

One evening, Mr. Morrell came into the premises through the back entrance. I was downstairs in the kitchen cooking the tea. My mother and father were not at home. Mr. Morrell was there for a few minutes before I realised he was there.

'What's for tea?' he asked.

He gave me such a fright. I tried to scream but I couldn't find my voice. I went numb. I froze. He grabbed my hair, wrenching it from behind, put his hand over my mouth and threw me to the floor. The rest is history.

———'Members of the Jury have you reached your verdict?'

'We have, your Honour.'

'How say you?'

'We find the defendant, Not Guilty'.

On evidence, the jury determined Clara's marriage to Morrell was a sham. Morrell had gone to her father with a proposition. He would make an honest woman out of Lindrum's daughter in exchange for Lindrum putting him on the Lindrum payroll. Lindrum could go to the police and report the rape but the publicity would not serve the family well and what man would want to marry his daughter after that.

The Judge turned on Morrell and told him his conduct was unacceptable in a moral society. He then dissolved both marriages and awarded sole custody of Horace to his mother. The headlines:

'Jury brings down verdict in Jazz Baby case. Mother gets custody...

Mrs. Morrell says: 'She won't remarry Lindley'. Judge says: 'Whole affair is stranger than fiction' came and went but stories about the trial continued for months.

Clara reverted to her maiden name and waited patiently for the hullabaloo to subside before heading to Melbourne to collect the Marbles Champion of New South Wales. Whilst she was waiting she read and re-read her son's letters.

Dear Mum,

Just a few lines hoping you are well and not worrying. I suppose you know you get nothing from worrying. I am to tell you I am in the fittest condition through wearing a smile. Win or lose, come home with a smile, Mum. I have been treated very well since you have been away. Grandpa bought me new shirts and socks. I have to wear my grey suit now as my black one is worn out.....

Your LOVING son xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

What Horace hadn't told her was his uncle Walter had taken the reins on her son's career. Horace's transportation to Melbourne had provided Walter with an

opportunity – at least that is what Walter thought at the time – and it provided Horace with an opportunity that would otherwise not have existed.

‘11-year-old Horace Morrell is the goods alright.  
He will be a world-beater in my opinion.  
No question about it.’<sup>80</sup>

Like the hero in Celtic myths Horace followed his uncles into a world where he had never been before. At first glance he had no idea what he was doing in that realm. He eventually succumbed to the magic of the green baize and the adventurer in the boy turned into the man who wanted to share his talent with the world.

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<sup>80</sup> ‘*The Sporting Globe*’ by Masse, Saturday evening April 28, 1923.

## Chapter Four

### The Real McCoy

Horace had grown up. He was still enjoying the Wurlitzer<sup>81</sup> and The Man of a Thousand Faces<sup>82</sup> but he was no longer a boy.

Stony broke after paying her legal bills, Clara had no idea how she was going to help her son to achieve his dreams. She didn't have sixpence to get him to Penrith let alone enough for a boat ticket to London. She did, however, have an entrepreneurial spirit and it was that initiative that laid the foundations for Horace's future.

Clara didn't conjure a fancy business plan. Her plan was ridiculously simple. She was her father's daughter and she did what her father did. She opened a billiard room. In the absence of paternal support, opening another Lindrum's was going to be an aggravation at best but it wasn't the decision to open a billiard room that rocked the family foundation stones. It was Clara's decision to take back the reins on her son's career. The last thing her father and Walter had expected was for Clara to waltz in and steal their thunder which is exactly what she did. Her father and Walter had set up the long reds. Clara came along and pocketed them.

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<sup>81</sup> The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. was established in Cincinnati, Ohio and North Tonawanda, New York, USA, in 1853 by German immigrant Rudolph Wurlitzer. In the beginning Wurlitzer imported stringed, woodwind and brass instruments into the United States. The company began manufacturing pianos in 1880. Products included the Band organ, Orchestrion, Nickolodeon, Pipe organ and Theatre organ, all of which were very popular during the days of the silent movie. Manufacture in the United States ceased in 2009. Wurlitzer pianos are still manufactured in Germany.

<sup>82</sup> Famous vaudevillian silent screen star, Lon Chaney (1883-1900). Born Alonzo (Leonidas Frank) Chaney to deaf-mute parents, it is thought his efforts to communicate with his parents is the chief reason that he became so expert at his acting craft. Chaney was dubbed 'The Man of a Thousand Faces' for his uncanny ability to transform himself into many types of characters through make-up, mime and pantomime. Lon Chaney's life inspired a motion picture *The Man of a Thousand Faces* (1957), directed by Joseph Pevney and starring actor James Cagney in the lead role.

Five years later the family tiff had turned into a glacial rift. 'There will be no more new billiard champions for at least 10 years,' Walter told a journalist at the *Evening Herald*. Clara retaliated. 'My brother, Walter, doesn't know what he is talking about.' Sibling rivalry had, once again, surfaced.

A twelve month rent free lease on the Mechanics Hall in Goulburn was offered with a pledge to smarten the place up. Scrubbing brushes, a few pots of zinc oxide, half a dozen Aladdin and Tilley lamps, two Hercules fire-proof partitions courtesy Fred K. Jones & Co. Tables and equipment – and – Bob's your uncle!

LINDRUM'S opens for business tonight...

Be there! All welcome.

The room was a great success and the first week's takings, all fifteen pounds of it, was enough to launch Horace's first big tour of Australia and New Guinea. Fifty years later he'd travelled the world.

'What did your Dad do for a living?'

'He was a cueist,' I say.

'A what?'

'A remarkable man with a remarkable talent. He travelled eighteen times around the globe on a piece of wood.'

The earnings from Lindrum's in Goulburn provided the seed capital for the establishment of Lindrum's in Pitt Street, Sydney.

Eight tables and an exhibition table, the room was located adjacent to the Lyceum theatre. The number one table overlooked Pitt Street. My grandmother kept this table for herself and for my father. The Showman practiced on this table in the evenings in full view of the patrons. How do I know that? Les Wheeler told me and Les would know. He knew my father well before my mother and I came into view.

At the very beginning of his career, Les worked for the *Sportsman*<sup>83</sup>, an in-depth form guide and Australia's most authoritative racing journal. After that he was racing writer for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, then sub-editor and Sporting Editor. He was also a major contributor to the English publication, *Snooker Scene*.

Les used to visit Lindrum's in Pitt Street. His father would take him there on a Saturday evening. He was a fifteen-year-old schoolboy when he took his first look. If first impressions count for anything, Les's very vivid memory of a well-organised and immaculately maintained billiard room managed by a 'Firebrand' (my grandmother) has to count for something. Les confided, 'If anyone even said "I'll bet you two bob," Miss Lindrum would fly down like a rocket and not only stop it, she'd throw you out. What is more, you didn't argue with the boss. She'd rouse on you if you so much as thought about backchat. It was as if she could read your mind. I can still hear her giving one fellow a good dressing down.

"Did you drop that match, Mr. Brown? Would you do that in your own home? Of course, you wouldn't, so don't do it here. If I catch you doing it again, you won't get back in. Do we understand each other?" Brown nodded his head and mumbled "Sorry, Miss".'

Les's observations are shared by German author, Rudolph Brasch. In his book *How Did Sports Begin? The origins of Man at Play*, published by Longman Australia in 1972, Brasch refers to Lindrum's in Pitt Street as 'the best billiard room in the world', to the Lindrum family as 'the aristocracy of billiards', to the exemplary manner in which my grandmother ran the billiard room to be

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<sup>83</sup> *Sportsman* – 'The Bible for students of racing. Committed to the provision of clear and comprehensive form analysis and the latest inside information.' First established in 1900, Banjo Paterson was editor of the publication from 1921-1930. Establishment and evolution of the *Sportsman* can be traced to the Australian nation's love affair with racing and the racing industry. Les Wheeler told me all referred to the publication as 'The Sportsman'.

evidence of 'their expressive love of the game' and to Horace as 'The greatest exhibition player the world has ever seen.'<sup>84</sup>

I wanted Les to tell me about the Showman. 'What was he like?' I asked. 'Well, Jan, it was such a pleasure to know him. You didn't have to be afraid because he was a champion. He loved to joke. Loved to laugh. My word, he was a popular fellow. He knew all the customers and would walk down the room and go out of his way to say hello. He was easy to know. There was nothing distant about him.

Do you know the handwriting story, Jan?

'I know my father wrote in copperplate with a great flourish.'

'Yes, he did. That came from his schooling in Victoria. I developed my handwriting skill in North Queensland and wrote in a more severe, plain style. Your father used to say to me: "That's not a "T". That's an "S". Tell you what, let's select a passage out of Shelley's *Frankenstein*<sup>85</sup> and you write it out and I'll write it out and we'll see what people think about the writing". I lost that competition!'

Les went on to tell me that my grandmother gave him his first job. He collected the money from patrons and set up the tables. He also acted as a 'Marker' on the Kelly Pool table ensuring players played by the rules.

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<sup>84</sup> Rudolph Brasch, *How Did Sports Begin: A Look into the Origins of Man at Play* (Australia: Longman Australia Pty. Limited, 1971), 44.

<sup>85</sup> British author Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* or *The Modern Prometheus* was first published anonymously in London in 1818. The second edition was published under Mary Shelley's name in France in 1823. It might be argued that the fictional story of Victor Frankenstein – a young scientist who creates a monster – is a reflection of Mary Shelley's somewhat tumultuous life and makes a fascinating study. Mary's father was philosopher William Godwin (1756-1836). Her mother was author/philosopher/feminist Mary Wollstonecraft (1797-1851). Mary eloped with romantic poet and philosopher Percy Bysshe Shelley (1816-1822) whom she married in 1816 after the suicide of Shelley's first wife, Harriet (1816). Mary Shelley's story has inspired a number a motion picture treatments and remains a fascinating case study. Perhaps the most famous motion picture is the one of same name (1931) directed by James Whale adapted from the play by Peggy Webling, loosely based on Mary's novel, starring Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, John Boles and Boris Karloff.

One evening my father called him over and told him a patron had arrived for a game but he didn't have a partner so he should take his cue and give the fellow a game. The patron turned out to be one of his school teachers. Les beat him. Two days later, the school sent another teacher along and, over time, Les gained quite a reputation in his class for beating his teachers.

There was so much I wanted to ask Les Wheeler. Did you know Bradman didn't have to turn his head to look at the bowler? He had what Les called the 'strong eye'. So did my great-grandfather.

'The Ringmaster was the man I wanted to meet but I didn't make my first visit to Melbourne until 1949 and your great-grandfather had already passed away. He was the genius, Jan. One of the great coaches in the history of our nation, the greatest if you take into account the number of champions he produced from the same family. He woke up to the reality that the opposite eyed player had the real advantage. If you are right-eyed, you need to play with your left arm. If you are left-eyed, you need to play with your right. As for Horace, well Horace had the Magic Eye.' He laughed, a delightfully wicked laugh.

'I've told you something of your father, did you know billiard tables are like people? Oh, yes, Jan, billiard tables have their own character and personality.' After my several conversations with Les Wheeler, I found a greater understanding of what it must have been like to be a Lindrum growing up in an Australia I never knew, in a profession I only ever knew from the sidelines.

On March 22, Jack Oake published an article about Australia's new boy wonder in the *Sporting Globe*. The article was a significant milestone in Horace's career. Oake proclaimed:

Horace Lindrum is the greatest player of his age in the world,  
his love for the game practically compels him to be its slave.

After reading that article, Horace began to give serious thought to his own type of play, play from an 'entertainment' rather than a 'competitive perspective'. Oake had seen the Showman in Horace before Horace had seen the Showman in himself. He started carrying photographs of certain strokes in his mind so he could develop them from an artistic perspective and he asked himself over and over: 'What does the audience want from me?' The answer to this question didn't come quickly because the fierce competitive spirit inside the Lindrum household forced Horace to spend much of his time proving himself as a billiard player and snooker, the game that he loved, had yet to gain popularity. When the answer did come, it was as if Edison had switched on the light. Everyman craves excitement.

Horace had worked hard on developing his artistic skills on his last tour. Now, he was tired. He felt he'd earned a rest. A stint at home. Mum's cooking. One or two early nights away from the shaded overhead light on the green cloth of a billiard table and the click, click of the balls, crawling into bed well after midnight. It didn't seem like a lot to ask but it obviously wasn't going to happen. Something had come up. Clara had made plans.

Diminutive, with violet eyes and flaming red hair, Clara had more tricks up her sleeve than the devil himself. Nobody, not even her own son, could read what was going on in her extraordinary and always original mind. In many respects she was as eccentric as the man who had dubbed her a genius, Paderewski.

Horace reappeared.

'Righto, Mum, before you tell me, how about we sit down and have a cuppa with a couple of those scones?'

Moments of uncomfortable silence followed.

'I've entered you in the Australian professional billiards championship.'

There was a pause before Clara delivered the punch line.

'You play your uncle Frederick tomorrow night...'

The World's Best Boy Billiard Player had played his uncle Frederick before but not for his uncle's crown. Overwhelmed, Horace propped his right elbow on the table, rested his head in his hand and reflected on the forthcoming foray with his uncle Walter. The night of his debut still haunted him and it is probably fair to say he carried the scars for a lifetime.

A beating. It was a brutal beating. The sixteen-year-old Marbles champion of New South Wales pitted against the thirty-year-old seeded professional. Indefinable anxiety versus nerves of steel. Why had he agreed to be his uncle Walter's punching bag? He'd asked himself that question I don't know how many times. He never found an answer and lived with the regret largely because his countrymen, who saw Horace and Walter as equals rather than master and apprentice, remembered what they wanted to remember.

'Where on earth have you gone?' Clara asked, placing a hand on her son's shoulder.

'You haven't been listening to a word I've said.'

Clara explained she had raised the money for Horace's entry into the world professional billiards championship. She had played her fingers to the bone to put the fees together. Mysteriously the entry had gone missing. She couldn't prove it but believed the gambling boys had scratched her son and her brother just as they had scratched Phar Lap in the Caulfield.

Horace looked horrified. His uncle Frederick was the Australian champion so it was only appropriate for him to represent the nation and he could not understand why anyone would want to scratch the Australian champion and the 'Boy Wonder' from the competition. The event would be far more exciting with them in it than out of it. Clara saw the puzzlement on her son's face. 'The betting boys couldn't have you and Frederick in the same race with Walter. One of you would put a spanner in their works and men like that don't like spanners. Walter has played right into their hands. If he's not careful...'

Clara stopped short.

‘One must focus on winning strategies. Remember that Horace. I got on the phone and organised your debut in the United Kingdom. I told the British Association that this was their big chance to book the dual title holder before anyone else. Win tomorrow, my darling, and you will be on the *Straithaird*<sup>86</sup> on Wednesday night.’

The words whirled around and around in his head.

‘To go on this trip, I need to beat one of the greatest billiard champions this nation has ever seen.’

Clara read his thoughts.

‘That’s true, my darling, but the time has come for an old lion to pass the baton to his cub. I believe you can beat my brother and I also believe my brother will be proud to pass the torch to a fellow artiste.’

She pulled the boat ticket out of her pocket and danced around the room, waving the ticket high above her head.

‘Here’s your rite of passage.’

Horace watched his mother then looked across at his cue case. This was, without question, his big break, but could he do it?

Could he beat his uncle Frederick?

Did he want to try?

Twenty-four hours later he walked down Pitt Street, looking intermittently at the billboards plastered on shop fronts.

#### LINDRUM versus LINDRUM

‘See the Perfectionist and the Boy Wonder go head to head for the Australian Title – tonight – be there.’

An onlooker saw a young man about to run. At least, that’s what he thought he saw but the young man kept walking, kept putting one foot in front of the other

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<sup>86</sup> *RMS Strathaird* later *TSS Strathaird*, a vessel of the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company, launched July 18, 1931.

reminding himself what he needed to win. 'Fifty per cent skill. Twenty-five per cent – control your nerves. Twenty-five per cent – Dame Fortune.'

The room was packed to the rafters and Horace could hear the noise a block away. Hundreds of people crammed into a small space. Behind the scenes, Clara was busying herself laying out the clothes. Dinner suit, waistcoat, starched white shirt, bow tie, cummerbund, braces, socks, suspenders, shoes – highly polished with Nugget – the whole kit and kaboodle purchased a week ago at a clearance sale at Gowings.

Glancing at the clock, she pulled the hairbrushes and the Brylcreem from the top drawer. An hour later she watched as her brother walked to the table. Tall and slender, he looked every bit the champion. Nobody, except Clara, dreamed that he would lose the title that night; a title he had held for twenty-seven years. Frederick's attitude at the table and delivery were near perfection and he began scoring at an extraordinary rate. Meantime, his nephew sat silent as a mouse. If the hand of fate had twisted ever so little Horace would not have taken passage on the *Straithaird* for this was battle between a Knight of the Inner Temple who could execute amazing technical shots and a journeyman who was yet to be dubbed a Knight.

A day later, dressed in turquoise coat and picture hat Clara stood on the dock living the second most important moment of her life. She would not see the chapter she had sacrificed her whole life to see written into history. "For auld lang syne", she whispered. 'Don't blink. The worst thing you can do is blink.'

Standing at the ship's rail Horace reflected on his remarkable past. He had not had much time to think about a childhood bent over a billiard cue. The present was about all he had ever been able to manage. Now, standing at the ship's rail, he found time to think back over the last few years. So much seemed to have happened. The professional Marbles Title of New South Wales. Quite a feat for a boy of fourteen. First snooker century at sixteen. An unheard of

achievement. Australian professional snooker title at nineteen. Australian professional billiards title at twenty-one. Wunderkind! But it was his mother's chance meeting with a man by the name of Bill South that had really changed his life. 'Chance' is a relative term. Clara never did things by chance. She was a planner not a gambler.

Horace recalled the first time he'd met South, a short, chunky little man with eyes much too big for his tiny head, ridiculously long lashes that gave him, in combination, the appearance of a cartoon character. He'd been walking with his mother outside 101 Collins Street when they bumped into him. He remembered the incident clearly. Even above the city din, his memory had managed to record the words between his mother and this stumpy little man and he now replayed the scene in his mind.

'Not a word from you, Horace, just smile,' she instructed under her breath as they'd approached. Then she walked up to this short little bloke wearing a look of feigned surprise...

'Well, well, well. My, my, my! Long time no see, Bill South.'

'Giddyday, Clara, how yer goin' love?'

South possessed a bushman's drawl and an accent you'd expect to find west of the Dividing Range.

'Top of the world, Bill, and you?'

'What chu up to these days, Clara?'

'Oh, a little bit of this and a little bit of that.'

Bill then looked up at Horace. Even at fourteen, he was the taller of the two.

'This yer boy?'

'Say "good morning" to Mr. South,' Clara commanded, even though moments earlier she'd told Horace to keep his mouth shut.

Bill was a popular identity with the public in the idiom of a leg-spin bowler or an opera star. Journalists were always writing him up for something. On the one hand, he was successful, on the other, he was a spectacular failure.

One year he was forced to settle a negligence action brought by a trapeze artist. To wit, failing to replace a faulty rope resulting in a nasty fall. The artist still looked like a china doll that had been picked up and thrown against a brick wall. On another occasion an old lion mauled his trainer. These temporary setbacks, as South called them, were newsworthy and his capacity to rise like a Phoenix from the ashes, legendary.

Recently, however, he'd fallen foul of the editor of the *City News*. The tiff, rift, call it what you will, was over the coverage the paper was giving to his greatest adversary. Smith was at a complete loss to understand the editor's obsession with Bullen and his amphibious giants and scraggy-haired sword swallows and the 'Bullen this' and 'Bullen that' got up his nose. 'You've had that cove on the front page for the last six weeks,' he screamed down the telephone.

Bumping into Clara was South's lucky break or should I say it was Horace's? That singular event plucked Horace from the shadows and took him from ironing billiard tables in his grandfather's billiard room to the front pages of newspapers around the country. Whilst his star may have been on the ascendency, it took the experience of circus to move the story of his career rise from the back to the front of the paper.

Clara took her favourite seat at the Windsor whilst South went to make a phone call. He promised to be five minutes. Clara knew five meant fifteen so she ordered afternoon tea from Arthur the lanky waiter from Toorak. An assortment of finger sandwiches – egg and mayonnaise, cucumber, celery and walnut, smoked salmon and cream cheese – half a dozen *petits fours* and two English breakfast teas.

Arthur had returned to dress the table. Clara watched his every move, her ear to Tommy tinkling the ivories. Tommy was playing a favourite, Jolson's "Climb upon my knee, Sonny Boy".<sup>87</sup>

South accepted tea, although he would have preferred a stiff drink, and, greedily eyeing the *petit fours*, squeezed his sizable bottom into the leather lounge.

'Bit Flemington, isn't it?' He commented. Bill was admiring the pretty young fillies dotted around the room.

'Now, to business, we've known each other a long time and I know you didn't ask me to tea for nothing. What can I do for you, Clara?'

Clara picked up her handbag and propped it on her lap.

'It's not what you can do for me, old boy, it is what I can do for you. You could do with a helping hand. Engage young Horace, Billy, my boy, and we'll have those Yankees on the next boat.'

South hid his amusement behind a linen serviette. Standing proudly in his knickerbockers and gripping his cue case, Horace was smiling up at him, as if he were sharing the joke.

'Come and see him, Bill. He'll wipe the smile off your face.'

'Well, if looks count for anything, he's a looker, I'll give you that, but has he got the talent?'

This time it was Clara who was choking on the words.

'Has he got the talent! I know you don't believe what they write in the newspapers but when they write about Horace I am telling you they are writing the truth.'

Three days later South's curiosity got the better of him and he turned up at the billiard room.

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<sup>87</sup> "Sonny Boy" was written by Ray Henderson, Bud De Sylva and Len Brown and first performed in the talkie motion picture *The Singing Fool* 1928. Al Jolson's recording of "Sonny Boy" was a big hit.

'I never would have believed it if I hadn't seen it for meself,' he said to the journalist standing next to him.

'Brilliant! The boy is bloody brilliant!' Oake agreed.

'When I watch this boy doing smooth quiet positional shots with a beautiful cue rhythm it makes me think of velvet.'

South moved a little closer to the action.

Horace was now dancing around the table, potting balls faster than the referee could get them out of the pockets.

'Well?' asked Clara, sidling alongside and timing her move to perfection.

'That's the century,' called the referee.

A broad smile spread across South's face.

Jack, Queen, King, Ace!

Two months later, whilst Bullen's circus and three other great circuses, in the style of Stardust, Ashtons and Loritz, were preparing for an almighty challenge in the Haymarket, South's bread and potatoes operation was on the road. Four hours sleep and a cup of tar and it was inland to Grafton the City of Jacarandas across country to Glen Innes, down to Armidale, along the Namoi to Narrabri, beside the Gwydir highway to Moree and along Fossickers Way to Thunderbolt territory.<sup>88</sup>

A week in Tamworth then across the Great Dividing Range to Wauchope and on to Port Macquarie. A few days at the mouth of the Hastings then up to Kempsey and Nambucca. A fish chase up the Nambucca then along the Jack Perkins track to Bellingen and through the Promised Land to Dorrigo. A swim in the shadow of Mutton Bird Island before moving south west to Gunnedah, Coonabarabran, Dubbo, Orange and Bathurst. A few days in Bathurst, back to Orange and on to Parkes, Forbes, Cowra and Young, down to Cootamundra and west to Temora.

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<sup>88</sup> Thunderbolt Territory (Tamworth) – where the spirit of Australian poet Henry Lawson still roams the downs.

Whizzing along at a cracking pace through corridors of red-tipped gum trees, purple weeds sprouting from their wombs. Beside banks of rusty-coloured native grasses curtained by undulating hills, purple in hue. Across paddocks blanketed in yellow daisies, sprinkled with Wattle and dotted with clumps of Geranium. Passed parklands, bakeries, antique shops, vineyards, churches, pubs and corner stores.

Town to town. Landscape continuously changing. Passed farming stations, snapping dogs, sheep and stock horses grazing, blue-breasted water birds pecking for worms. Besides creeks and rivers muddied by rainfall, flocks of sulphur-crested Cockatoos screeching overhead. Lumbering into gullies of broken and bleached logs, low-lying lantana and piles of burnt timbers lying idle against trees wrapped in long-fingered vines, spindly arms playing host to chestnut-coloured Babblers singing loudly from their nests.

The countryside, a blue forest canvas, layer upon layer of cobweb paintings lit at the corners by tiny triangles of sunshine, textured with dew and insects and scented with smoke and eucalyptus. The smell pungent, sharp, hitting at the nostrils.

Then the Kookaburras would start laughing and raucous flocks of yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos would start their high-pitched wailing and Swifts would soar and swirl and the Currawongs would fly from the mountains bringing with them the bad weather, forcing South and his circus to battle the elements and cope with the continuous bump of the wagons over muddy flats.

Horace thrived on the circus experience. His diary is alive with the reflections of an Australian excited by what was happening around him in an Australia so thrilling I want to reach out and touch it back into existence. It's an Australia of pioneers and adventurers who understood the hot, gold hush of noon and who saw the sunlit plains extended and the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars in a searing light projected onto a landscape writ large for their eyes only. Sadly for us, we can but look from a great distance and imagine what

it must have been like to travel from country town to country town on horseback, living as they lived and encountering what they encountered.

‘I need some help to get rid of my nerves,’ he confides to Sebastian, an aerialist known as the Flying Fox. ‘I need to become a man of confidence.’

‘You’ll never get rid of the nerves. Nerves are part of your personality. Very few men have nerves of steel and nerves of steel are no good to the artist. What you need to learn is how to manage your nerves. Breathing helps and a smile and a wink go a long way towards winning an audience. Your bigger hurdle will be learning how to combat the adoration.’

‘Adoration?’

‘Nobody can prepare you for the attention you get when you become a big star. You’re already being promoted as the Great Lindrum and how old are you! You are headed for the sort of greatness that some men never see. You will no longer belong to yourself.’

‘I am not sure I understand.’

‘Well, you will, young ‘Orace, all in good time.’

In the meantime, Jack, Queen, King, three Aces and a Joker!

Days passed. Months passed. Brewarrina to Bourke. Bourke to Parkes. A week before Christmas South’s circus arrived in Wagga Wagga. Once perched on the outskirts of the town, a small group of well-toned muscle men set about pasting lithographs whilst trainers groomed their animals, performers rehearsed their routines and South carried out the usual equipment checks to ensure everything that should go ‘wizz, bang and pop’ went ‘wizz, bang and pop’. Bewildering pandemonium broke out an hour before the parade. That’s when South took up his pistol.

One shot to shut up.

Two shots for the church blessing.

Blessing over, dollies and follies pulled on their wigs, donned their makeup and shimmied into sequins and mirrored corsets of the kind that only

Gaultier<sup>89</sup> could conjure today. Musicians tuned their instruments and trick riders – some of whom looked like Peck’s Bad Boy and others like Little Johnny Jones<sup>90</sup> – readied their cavalcade of exotic, but imaginary, boxing elephants for the plodding down the main street.

At midday, South, dressed as Town Crier and ringing a large bell, led the highly coloured Circus wagons into town. ‘Hurry, hurry, hurry, South’s circus is coming. Guest appearance, the great Lindrum’ .....

Children, dressed in their Sunday best, sucking humbugs and chomping on apple quarters appeared from nowhere, clinging to their mothers’ skirts, riding on their fathers’ shoulders and dreaming of everything from Uncle Tom’s licorice to endless rides on the Carousel.

Sweating profusely and mopping his brow with a large spotted handkerchief, South headed straight for the Town Hall. The Mayor, a Goliath of a man, stood astride a dais, the welcoming committee on the one side, the Country Women’s Association on the other. Raising his eyes to the heavens and tugging at his collar, he muttered, ‘God, it looks like they’re going to lynch me!’

Dribbling with anticipation, the children whinged and whined through the speeches extruding a collective sigh of relief when little Lucy Atkins (an oversized clone of a toe-tapping Shirley Temple <sup>91</sup>) stepped forward to present

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<sup>89</sup> Reference to French Haute Couture and Pret-a-Porter Fashion Designer, Jean Paul Gaultier (1952-). Before going into business for himself Gaultier worked for Hermes and Pierre Cardin. His sculptured costumes are considered playful, creative, decadent, masterful and irreverent. He designed the infamous cone bra for Madonnas’s 1990 “Blond Ambition Tour” and has designed costumes for many motion pictures, including Luc Besson’s *The Fifth Element* (1997) (France).

<sup>90</sup> Reference to the motion picture *Yankee Doodle Dandy* and, more particularly, to the performance of James Cagney in the role of George M. Cohan and Cohan’s early on-stage vaudeville performances with his mother, father and sister: ‘The Four Cohans’.

<sup>91</sup> Shirley Temple (April 23, 1928–February 10, 2014), was an American born film and television actress, singer and dancer who, in her later years, became US Ambassador to Ghana and later Czechoslovakia and acted as Chief of Protocol of the United States. Temple was the biggest motion picture box-office success during the period 1935-1938 and, after her performances in the motion pictures *Curly Top* and *Heidi* the academy awarded her a special juvenile academy award.

the keys to the city. Politely accepting the posy of wattle and gum leaves in one hand and the keys in the other, South bowed, winked at the ladies, put a whistle between his lips, pushed the oxygen out of his lungs and signalled...

‘Let the games begin!’

Up went the candy-striped tents, spreading their tentacles like giant octopi and out came the ice cream stand whilst the Mayor and official party sipped pink lemonade and gasped in horror at the bearded lady.

‘Buy your tickets here. Over here!’ called a contortionist bent and twisted and walking on his hands.

‘Ride the carousel, play the hoop la! he called again, pulling his head through his legs and waving to a copycat Grimaldi<sup>92</sup> doing the Highland fling.

Mothers scrounged in their purses, fathers dug deep into their pockets and children exchanged their piggy bank savings for tickets whilst half a dozen pretty young things, one or two courting Fascinators, crowded around the strong man in the gold spandex.

Clutching their tickets, the people of Wagga Wagga filed inside the tent. It was a few minutes after two when South dressed in white top hat and tails entered the ring to introduce the grand parade.

In the red ring, floats of pretty girls in spectacular bird of paradise costumes, hoofers in the style of Fred<sup>93</sup> and Ginger<sup>94</sup> and acrobats in Royal

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<sup>92</sup> Joseph Grimaldi (1778-1837) English actor, comedienne, dancer. In the early 1880's Grimaldi expanded the role of CLOWN in the harlequinade that formed part of British pantomimes notably at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane and at Sadler's Wells and the theatres of Covent Garden. The CLOWN became known as 'Joey' and he wore white face makeup.

<sup>93</sup> American born Frederick Austerlitz (May 10, 1899–June 22, 1987) 'Fred Astaire' was a famous star of stage and screen – dancer (especially tap and ballroom), choreographer, singer, musician and actor. His most famous dancing partner was Ginger Rogers. Tragically, despite his extraordinary performances on screen, more particularly in the film *Top Hat*, Fred Astaire was never awarded an academy award.

<sup>94</sup> American born actress, dancer, singer of stage, radio, television and screen, Virginia Katherine McMath (July 16, 1911–April 25, 1995) 'Ginger Rogers' collaborated on 73 motion pictures with Fred Astaire. She was awarded an academy aware for her performance in the motion picture *Kitty Foyle* (1940).

purple tutus and pink ballet pumps springing on and off cream-coloured ponies with the agility of the little Nugget.<sup>95</sup>

In the blue ring, a man spinning like Plushenko<sup>96</sup>, clowns in the style of Popov and Saluto<sup>97</sup> riding up and down a slippery slope with the precision of the sweetheart of Canada and Merlin prancing like Tati<sup>98</sup> on his imaginary horse, every so often stopping to extract a coin from a child's ear.

Thirty-five feet above the ground, the Flying Foxes exchange swings in mid-air and Blondin,<sup>99</sup> hero of the Niagara, stands on one leg, balancing a pole and eating an omelet. The feat so daring many in the audience believe him to have been hit by a windmill!<sup>100</sup>

Below, the band sits on an elevated platform playing Sousa's "Washington Post."<sup>101</sup> Dressed in green suits with shiny brass buttons down the front of their jackets and Epauettes of metallic gold, they court scarlet plumes in caps perched forward on their heads. The conductor, a white-gloved man with a neatly-trimmed beard is the spitting image of the March King.

Ah! the magic of it all.

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<sup>95</sup> Born near Dubbo in the state of New South Wales, William Billy Jones (1842-1906) was a famous Indigenous acrobat who was known as a 'manly fellow of exquisite proportions' who could walk a tight rope, dance a hornpipe and perform incredible feats on horseback.

<sup>96</sup> Evgeni Plushenko (1982-) Russian figure skater, Olympic medalist and World Champion.

<sup>97</sup> Oleg Konstantinovich Popov (1930-) famous Society and Russian clown. Frankie Saluto began clowning in 1928. He was a famous clown with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circuses.

<sup>98</sup> Jacques Tati (born Jacques Tatischeff) on October 09, 1907 at Le Pecq, Yvelines, France. Comic actor, writer, director and filmmaker. Academy Award (1958) Best foreign language film, *Mon Uncle*.

<sup>99</sup> Charles Blondin was a famous circus performer with the Ravel Troupe. In 1858 the troupe performed at the Niagara Falls, a famous tourist destination situate on the border of New York State and Canada. Blondin convinced the local authorities to permit him to walk a tight rope across the falls. He completed the feat in June 1859.

<sup>100</sup> A common saying in Holland to describe someone who is more than a little crazy.

<sup>101</sup> "Washington Post" is a march composed by John Philip Sousa in 1889. It remains today as one of his most popular marches throughout the United States of America. Sousa was known as the March King.

.....Horace waited for the applause to taper off. Then, reaching into his pocket, he withdrew an egg.

'It's a Cooker Billy, Daddy!'

Enthralled, the audience watched as Horace held the egg between his thumb and second finger and then set it spinning along the cushion.

Like a train heading for the station, the egg travelled, unaided, the full length of the table, cannoning off the ball positioned at the top right hand corner and knocking it into the pocket before zipping along the top cushion to pot the ball waiting at the left.

This brought the house down!

'Bravo, Horace.'

The audience was on its feet.

Mavis, the Turkish Delight in the pink corset, cleared the pockets, sending the balls running back down the table.

Olive, a fair-haired Mata Hari<sup>102</sup>, produced a wicker basket resembling a Greek vase, strutted her stuff, turning the basket every which way so that the audience could see clearly it was as it seemed. No more no less than a wicker basket with a neck opening no bigger than a snooker ball. Horace wasted no time. Repositioning the balls, he reached for his cue and took aim.

'Did you see what I just saw?' the Mayor asked his wife.

The red ball flew into the basket's narrow neck, the force of its entry spinning the basket around in the opposite direction. Walking to the baulk end of the table, Horace stopped the white ball, positioned it and took aim.

'First he shot the red ball into the wicker basket and then the white ball went in and the red ball came out. The neck was only this big. Amazing!

Absolutely bloody amazing! And what about that shot at the end! He called it

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<sup>102</sup> Mata Hari (Margaretha Geertruida 'Margreet' MacLeod (nee Zelle), born in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands (1842-1891). A Frisian exotic dancer and courtesan Mati Hari was convicted of espionage and execute by firing squad in France under charges for spying for Germany during World War I.

the steeplechase. Goodness gracious, that was really somethin'. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, if someone had told me it was possible to do those things, I'd have told 'em they'd b'en kissin' the Blarney stone. The balls there one minute, gone the next. He pots 'em as if the pocket has some hidden magnetic force drawing them into it. As for the tricks with his hands, oh dear Lord!

The boy from down under took it all in his stride and, as he strolled back to his wagon, listening to little Nell singing: "He flies through the air with the greatest of ease that daring young man on his flying trapeze"<sup>103</sup>, he asked himself, 'Where to from here?'

But you never have to ponder the future for very long. The pork pies and jellied eels are often much closer than you think. That was what Horace was saying to himself as he stared out the window of the tiny plane winging its way through the thick cloud bank shrouding the jungles and coffee plantations of the Southern Highlands of New Guinea.

'I have no idea what to expect,' he told the dashing young man sitting next to him. 'All I know is, I love a good adventure.'

Errol Flynn agreed and it is more than fair to say that Lindrum and the Tassie-born Flynn took to the adventures of New Guinea as ducks take to water. Flynn – the playboy, the lady chaser, the swashbuckling hero – waving a sword above his head and leaping from galleon to galleon on a film set. Lindrum – the young man who'd pledged, 'not to become a lady chaser' – wielding his cue and leaping from break to break on a billiard table.

You might be wondering why Horace's first international trip was to New Guinea. The answer is simple. Clara saw opportunity in New Guinea. So, too, did fellow Australian, Michael (Mick) Leahy and his mate, Mick Dwyer.

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<sup>103</sup> Originally published as "The Flying Trapeze" in 1867, the song was inspired by trapeze artist Jules Leotard. The lyrics to the song were written by George Leybourne, music by Gaston Lyle and arrangement by Alfred Lee. Publication of the song inspired dramatist William Saroyan's short story "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze" (1934) which first appeared in *Story* magazine. A motion picture, *Man on the Flying Trapeze* starring W. C. Fields and Mary Brian was released in 1935.

Leahy and Dwyer believed New Guinea was not simply a continuation of jungles and precipitous mountains, it was a land of untapped potential and Leahy's trek to the interior of New Guinea created enormous excitement. Although not quite as much excitement as his row with the explorer Jack Hides.

Hides claimed to be the first man to discover and climb Mount Giluwe. Leahy said, 'Bullshit' and, like a pitbull, went on the attack. 'I was the first to have an encounter with that bloody mountain, you lousy phoney,' he crowed, storming into the offices of the Royal Geographical Society in London. The very public donnybrook thrust New Guinea into the international spotlight.

'Hurray, Mick has done all the hard work for me,' Clara said to herself. 'He's even installed a billiard table in his house in the Highlands. I'll write to him and ask him to organise a tour. The tour will generate a heap of publicity and provide Horace with the playing experience he needs before he takes on the Brits. New Guinea will toughen him up.' Was securing Horace a seat on the plane next to Error Flynn part of the plan? We will never know the answer to that question.

After learning to play billiards by the light of a kerosene lamp and pot balls into boots, Horace returned home with a princely sum in his pocket. Not quite enough to get him to the Mother country but more than enough for a ticket to the opening of Garbo and Barrymore's *Grand Hotel*.<sup>104</sup>

It was a beautiful day in Sydney as Empire Airlines flight 002 came in to land at Rose Bay, a gloved hand assisting passengers through the doorway and into a boat bobbing up and down on the harbour. Fifteen minutes later, the craft was scooting around Bennelong Point for the drop off at Circular Quay.

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<sup>104</sup> Released in 1932, the motion picture *Grand Hotel* was inspired by the 1929 novel *Menschen in Hotel* by Vicki Baum. Directed by Edmund Goulding and starring John Barrymore, Greta Garbo and Joan Crawford, the pictured won an Academy Award without it or its participants being nominated in any category.

‘Wow! Look at the crowds!’ Horace exclaimed to a man standing next to him. The people of Sydney had come out to greet the new addition to the P. & O. fleet. The *Straithaird* was certainly a beauty.

Horace finally managed to pull his tired body from the ship’s rail. ‘First the Circus, then New Guinea, now London is calling. God Bless you, Mum.’

On October 12, 1935, in a letter to his mother Horace exclaimed:

‘Hot dog!’ If someone had said to me six months ago:

“Horace, you will be in London in October and, on the way over, you’ll meet and make friends with Prince Farouk” – I’d have thought them plain crazy! Life is so unpredictable. You never know what it has in store.’

The Prince and his entourage, including the Prince’s personal tutor, Ahmed Bey Hassenein, joined the ship in Aden. The Prince was *en-route* to the Military Academy in Woolwich. Strikingly handsome and fabulously wealthy, the Descendant of the Terrible Turk oozed charm from the lapels of his Chester Barrie suit to the points of his shiny Italian shoes.

Thousands lined the dock at Tawahi for the vessel’s departure and a flotilla of flower bedecked boats of all shapes and sizes accompanied the liner into the Red Sea. Only the man who saw the spectacle could paint the picture. I don’t propose to try.

Bit-tawfi in a’Allah...

May God be with you.

Rabbena ywaffa ‘ak.

Good luck in your exams.

All praise to the All Merciful.

May God make it easy for you.

Goodbye, dear Prince.

The first officer introduced Horace to the Prince at the Captain's Table and the two hit it off immediately. Six months later Prince Farouk was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine. He had become the tenth ruler of the Muhammad Ali Dynasty, King of Egypt and the Sudan. Horace thought his friend looked uncomfortable on his father's throne. The lean to the right said: 'Ma sa' Allah' – God has willed it – rather than I am happy, but Horace knew only too well that taking responsibility came with a price. The following month journalists at the *News of the World*<sup>105</sup> informed their readers:

Horace Lindrum of Australia has been invited by the BBC to play Willie Smith of Darlington in the first of an experimental series aimed at putting cue sports onto television.<sup>106</sup>

Fifteen years later (1952), Horace was world professional snooker champion and his friend King Farouk was living in exile. Overthrown by his people, he was removed from his father's throne via a plan crafted by CIA operative Kermit Roosevelt Junior. The plan was code-named Project Fucker. Legend has it Farouk spent the remainder of his life contemplating the fate of kings, a notebook and a copy of the Works of William Shakespeare by his side. The bookmark strategically placed at *Richard II*, Act 3, Scene 2, Lines 151-166.

For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings...

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<sup>105</sup> *News of the World* was first established by John Browne Bell in 1843. Bell sold to Henry Lascelles Carr in 1891 and Carr to News Limited in 1969. At one time *News of the World* was the biggest selling English language newspaper in the world with a circulation of eight million in the 1950s. Closure in 2011 was a direct consequence of the 'hacking scandal'.

<sup>106</sup> The beginnings of mechanical television can be traced to the discovery of photoconductivity of the element of selenium by William Willoughby Smith in 1873, the invention of the scanning disk by Paul Gottlieb Nipkow in 1884 and John Logie Baird's demonstration of television moving images in 1926.

On the notepad he scrawled the words:

The whole world is in revolt.  
Soon there will be only five kings left.  
King of England, King of Spades, King of Clubs,  
King of Hearts and King of Diamonds.

With the rasping sound of brakes and the shushing of steam, the boat train pulled into Waterloo station. Bursting with excitement, Horace looked out the window. He was surprised to see so many people waiting on the platform. He never dreamed they might be waiting for him. He woke up to the reality when flash bulbs started exploding.

British champion, Tom Newman, winked at Jake Bisset. 'The boy is all personality. The public is going to love this guy.' Newman was right and, when centuries started rolling off Horace's cue faster than marbles off a breadboard, the press proclaimed: 'Horace Lindrum of Australia has arrived.'

Horace Lindrum of Australia is proving to be an overnight success. His enjoyment of the game of snooker is especially catching. Why he can hardly take his next shot for laughing. He never pretends with his audience, which – apart from his beautiful style – is one reason among several why he is such an attraction. Try as you may, you won't get a seat for any of his performances. The Royal Aquarium in Westminster, the St. James Hall in Piccadilly, The Union Club in Soho, Saville House in Leicester Square ...

ALL SOLD OUT!

My great-uncle Walter and batsman Sir Donald Bradman came along during the Depression era. Horace's star was in the ascendancy in 1928, the year Mickey Mouse made his debut in *Steamboat Willie*, D. H. Lawrence's *Lady*

*Chatterley's Lover* was banned, Duke Ellington and his Cotton Club Orchestra<sup>107</sup> recorded "Diga Diga Doo", Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly an aircraft across the Atlantic, Phar Lap arrived on Australian soil, every increasing numbers of Australians were looking for ways and means to broaden their horizons and the Golden Age of Flight<sup>108</sup> was no longer around the corner.

Billiards was still enjoying popularity but by 1936 interest had waned and falling box office receipts led to British champion Joe Davis's announcement to the London Press Club that 'Billiards was as dead as mutton'. That statement opened the doorway to the Golden Age of Snooker.<sup>109</sup> Six months later Horace made his debut at the Noble House of Thurston. Remembering the advice the great Sebastian had given – 'Always arrive early' – Horace agreed to meet Joe Davis at noon so the pair could get some practice in before the match. A good idea in theory. Not so in practice. On their arrival they found the entrance to Thurston's completely blocked by a massive queue of people hoping for tickets. Horace looked at Joe. Joe looked at Horace. 'What to do?'

They tried a number of times to explain who they were and why they needed to get through but nobody seemed to want to listen to what they had to say so they tried to edge their way along the walls. Well, as you can imagine, this behaviour was not to be tolerated.

'Hey! What do you think you're doing? You take your turn same as everybody else.'

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<sup>107</sup> Established by heavy-weight boxing champion Jack Johnson in 1920 in Harlem, the 'whites-only' night club was taken over by gangster Owney Madden in 1923 at the height of the prohibition era. Despite the fact that the Cotton Club was a 'whites-only' establishment it featured black entertainers and jazz musicians, including Billie Holiday, Lena Horne, Louis Armstrong and Count Basie. The club moved to the midtown theatre district in New York in 1936 where it was known for its celebrity nights featuring Jimmy Durante, George Gershwin, Al Jolson, Richard Rodgers, Eddie Cantor, Irving Berlin, Sophie Tucker, Judy Garland and many other stars of the era. Duke Ellington took over the resident orchestra at the club in 1927.

<sup>108</sup> A twenty-year period from World War I to World War II known as an era of elegant aircraft and in-flight service and rapid advances in aviation.

<sup>109</sup> The period from 1936-1952, interrupted by World War II.

'Here! Here!' murmured those around the objector.

'But we're playing,' Joe responded. 'My name is Davis.'

'Oh, yeah, and mine is Napoleon Bonaparte and my friend here, well, he's Horace Lindrum!' retorted the sceptic.

At that, Horace jumped upon a ledge and cried out:

'Folks, if you want to see Lindrum play tonight, you had better let him through because he's a little fellow about my size.'

'Oh he is, is he?'

It was the sceptic again. But the scepticism didn't last. Horace's broad grin gave the game away.

'He's telling you the truth. He is Horace Lindrum.'

The crowd started laughing and the sceptic and his friends picked Horace up and passed him over their shoulders to the box office. No mean feat as people along the way were clambering for autographs.

'You'll be needing this.'

Up came the cue case.

The crowd then parted to permit Joe to walk up the stairs.

'Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my great privilege to present to you all the way from Sydney, Australia – Australian Professional Billiards and Snooker Champion – Horace Lindrum.' Tom Newman's voice was clear and strong and ear-shattering applause delivered a hearty welcome to the Australian champion.

Thrilled by his showmanship, the British people couldn't get enough of him and it was the spectacle Horace created – the spectacle he had learned to perfect during his time with Bill South's circus – that turned snooker into a box office sell-out.

Wherever he went after his debut at Thurston's, he received a royal reception and he got to know the words to "Waltzing Matilda"<sup>110</sup> very well indeed for Banjo's song was played every time he put in an appearance.

In his first attempt at the world snooker crown, which came only months after his arrival, Horace was runner-up to Joe Davis in what was, without a shadow of a doubt, a nail-biting final. Horace needed only one frame to win but nerves got the better of him. Later in life, he openly admitted that this was the final he should have won.

In *The Referee*, February 27, 1937, Jack Oake wrote:

Horace Lindrum achieves fame...

In a handicap snooker tournament played in England between six of the world's leading exponents, Horace Lindrum, the young Australian snooker and billiards champion, has gained further fame. Of the six competitors, Lindrum had to concede points to all but Joe Davis. He did not win the event (Joe Davis emerged the victor) but finished a splendid second and set a new world record with a break of 114. When it is remembered that each of his opponents, bar Davis, received between fourteen and 35 points in every set, some idea of the regard in which Horace's play was viewed by the handicappers can be gained. This was easily the biggest snooker tournament ever played in the United Kingdom. It took fifteen weeks to complete and, of this period, twelve weeks was given to play at Thurston's Exhibition Hall in the heart of London and, after the 1936/37 final, the British players came to use the word 'Crikey!' on a regular basis.

A journalist in the *Mirror* (December 19, 1936) responded:

'Horace Lindrum sets up time snooker record.'

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<sup>110</sup> A widely-known Australian bush ballad written by poet and nationalist Banjo Paterson at Dagworth Homestead near Winton (a town in central west Queensland) in 1895. Christina Rutherford Macpherson is credited with the manuscript which was transcribed from a song she heard circa 1895 played by a band at the Warrnambool races (Warrnambool is a town in the western district of Victoria). The song was first published in 1903 and recorded as performed by John Collinson and Russell Callon in 1926.

“Crikey!” says Davis...

Brilliantly as Joe Davis played again at Thurston’s yesterday afternoon, in the last *Daily Mail* Gold Cue snooker heat, he was outplayed by the young Australian. Lindrum was in his most inspired mood.

Spectacular, daring, brilliant...

“Will you look at that one,” Davis muttered  
That “one” was a cut, nearly square, up the cushion into the top pocket at the cracking pace of a Hammond cut to the rails.

Lindrum took a turn at trying to smash the world record of 133 – the record recently made by Sidney Smith – and very nearly did so. He did create a record by winning the third frame by 101 to 31 in six minutes!

Spectators were crouching in their seats, holding their breath and taking penalty kicks at the unfortunates in front as Horace streaked along in the third game, starting with a blue, then all pinks and blacks. The century approached, all going well, then...at 94...Ah, tragedy! Pink had to be potted in the middle pocket. Last red needed touching out from the cushion over the top. Horace concentrated on that red and missed potting the pink by the smallest margin possible. Had he got it the rest were on, amounting to 135.

Horace had all the essential characteristics of a champion. The firm, business-like bridge with fingers well apart. The piston-like cue action. The head well down to the table with chin to the right of the cue. Head perfectly still during and for some time after the stroke. I have a photograph taken of him making a stroke during a match in 1935. Not taken by flash-light, the time of exposure was one second. The cue and cue-hand are obviously in motion. The ball has disappeared, but the profile is sharp and the head has not moved a fraction. Still, no matter how hard Horace tried, there was no Hey Presto for the Showman. Toppling Joe Davis wasn’t written in the stars. Davis had age and

experience on his side and Horace always played on 'Joe's turf', by 'Joe's rules' and on 'Joe's' tables.

This said, there were other possible reasons for Horace's loss to Davis in those early world championships. The Showman's artistic streak is one, his commitment to the ninth commandment of sport is another (The game is the thing). Entertaining people was more important to him than winning. It was, however, the combination of Horace Lindrum's youth, good looks, artistic streak and technical skill and Davis's age, experience and skill that turned the Lindrum/Davis partnership into a great and marketable team. Scores always terrifyingly close. They are to the history of Snooker what Federer, Nadal, Djokovic and Murray are to the history of tennis. According to the Black Poker:

'They were the greatest snooker partnership the game has ever seen. Joe Davis with his grim, determined play. Horace with his smiling face. The temperaments were balanced and, with both players giving of their best, the lucky spectators saw snooker being pushed right to the top as a spectacle with record after record being made and broken in a golden era the likes of which we will never see again.'

My mother, the Black Poker, met Joe Davis before she met Horace. The meeting took place during World War II at a small country pub known as The Dog & Pheasant. Situate in the village of Brook in Surrey, the pub was run by a cherub of a man by the name of Stan Platt. Platt's watering hole was popular with the armed services and, being the genial host that he was, Platt made a point of introducing his guests to the locals.

According to the Black Poker, Joe was a rotund, jovial clown who fitted his caricature as the Sultan of Snooker<sup>111</sup> and the Emperor of Pot perfectly but there was no fun in the man she met across the desk in the Dickensian offices of

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<sup>111</sup> The great cartoonist, Tom Webster, depicted Joe Davis as 'The Sultan of Snooker' and 'The Emperor of Pot'.

the governing body after the War. That man was focused on one thing and one thing only, winning the professional snooker title. The clown in the man had been put to bed.

From 1935 onwards Horace was forever on the move<sup>112</sup> and it was during those early years that he got to know England better than he knew his own country. He covered every main highway from Lands End to John O'Groats, along the way playing celebrity appearances with the Tottenham Hotspurs and great individual legends like Leeds United's Jack Milburn,<sup>113</sup> as he had done at home with great legends like Australian boxing champion Tommy Burns. A photo of Horace and Tommy is inscribed in Tommy's hand, 'Look at our braces. Weren't we something! Age twenty-three.'

The only record I could find of a holiday from the table was a trip to Germany with Melbourne Inman and his wife at the end of July, 1936. The trip coincided with Hitler's Olympics.

Telegram:

August 1, 1936. Germany is back in the fold of nations.  
Frederick Birchall  
Reporter – *New York Times*

Hitler's Olympics were hailed by American officials as the greatest and most glorious athletic festival of all time. Fifty-one nations and five thousand athletes took part. Horace talked of this experience and, on occasion, expressed his admiration for Hitler's oratorical skills. This created an argument in the house as our mother, who had lived through the blitz, appreciated none of Hitler's redeeming features. Of course, Horace didn't like Hitler. He thought Hitler was

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<sup>112</sup> During the Golden Age of Flight the route was Darwin, Singapore, Calcutta, Karachi, Cairo, Tripoli or Darwin, Singapore, Bangkok, Allahabad (India, Rangoon (Burma), Habbaniya (Iraq).

<sup>113</sup> Jack Milburn, nickname 'Wor Jackie', played four hundred and eight games for Leeds United.

a monster and he felt great compassion for the Jewish refugees who arrived in Australia after the war with very little money in their pockets.

Horace also talked of his friendship with Melbourne 'The Nose' Inman and expressed gratitude to the man who had played such a huge role in championing his career.

They say timing is everything and Horace's arrival on the snooker scene in London coincided with Inman's retirement. The thought of becoming somebody else's manager had never crossed Inman's mind. It was his nose<sup>114</sup> for talent that got him thinking about that possibility. He was so enchanted by Horace's play that the performer in him came to accept it was time to surrender the stage. After putting his cue in the rack Inman entered an exciting new chapter of his life, becoming a highly successful promoter of the billiards art.

There were several keys to Inman's success as a promoter. First and foremost, he held to the Greek ideal, believing a sportsperson's ultimate goal is to develop artistic and intellectual excellence. Secondly, he possessed an impeccable record of personal bests and his distinguished career as a proponent of the billiards art had earned him the admiration and respect of the billiards fraternity, not just in his own country, but across the globe. Thirdly, he was well-travelled, well-connected, doggedly determined,<sup>115</sup> financial and, above all else, the possessor of a fabulous sense of humour. The following tit-bit from Horace's diary says something of the spirit of the man:

Melbourne and I gave an exhibition in Brighton. It was an excellent evening with a most appreciative audience followed by a delicious supper and we were in fine spirits by the end of it, that is until we reached part of the main London to Brighton highway. Under repair, there were red lamps everywhere, all of them strung from a somewhat roughly constructed fence down the centre of the road.

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<sup>114</sup> Melbourne Inman was known for his bountiful proboscis.

<sup>115</sup> Melbourne Inman's nickname was 'The Twickenham Terrier'

Mel was at the wheel and misjudged the distance of the left mudguard from the lamps and, as we drove through, he caught a post and went into a light skid which caused the car to whip off the lamps, one after the other. At the end of the obstruction, the night watchman was waiting for us.

“Eer, what’s your game?” the Yorkshireman asked.

Mel, who was well known for his dry humour, replied:

“My game is snooker, Sir. I have taken all the reds, where are the colours?”

Underneath this entry is a photograph of Inman lounging in a boat. A regular Noel Coward, he has a sandwich in one hand and a glass of Bollinger in the other. There’s a marvellous tile on his head, a kind of cross between a panama and a straw. The caption reads: ‘Inman coaching his friend, Tom Reece, on his long swim through London from Richmond Lock to His Majesty’s ship *H.M.S. Buzzard* which lay anchored about a mile below Waterloo Bridge.’

There were thirty-six starters in the race that year. Amongst the more famous was champion long-distance swimmer of the world, J. H. Jarvis. Not all went to plan. Reece experienced what he called two pieces of curious bad luck. The first, right at the start of the race, came when another swimmer gave him a terrific kick in the ribs. The kick winded him and the injury caused him a lot of pain during the last few miles. A worse misfortune occurred in the first half-hour when he swam off-course.

‘You’re going the wrong way,’ Inman screamed, rocking the boat so hard it nearly landed him in the drink.

‘Pull your head out of the water, man.’

Reece could hear the noise but he thought the crowd was cheering him on.

'I must have gone some hundred yards up the backwater before I realised that I was horribly, wretchedly alone. Making the best of a bad job, I turned around and swam back to the main stream. By that time, of course, I was completely tailed off. The rest of the race was out of sight. Notwithstanding, I carried on, swimming steadily and at a fair pace. I caught up with the stragglers before long and, after another mile or two, I was in the race again.

One by one I kept dropping them behind me until I drew level with a giant of a man who was the champion of Denmark. I couldn't pass him. Perhaps, psychologically, I didn't want to pass him. To be brutally honest I think I wanted to make him my friend so he would one day invite me to a place I had always wanted to visit. Anyway, whatever the reason, every time I tried to spurt he spurted with me, and so we swam, shoulder to shoulder and stroke for stroke, for the better part of two hours. I got the Dane in the end, but only just. I finished eighth, he finished ninth.'

Six months later Reece made easy work of the English channel. But it was treading water from one side to another in an effort to get Queen Kellerman to Calais that catapulted him to hero status. *En-route* he proposed three times in an attempt to get Kellerman to focus on something other than the excruciating pain in her muscles. As flattered as she may have been, she declined the offer, quit the Channel swim and took herself to America where, in 1907, she performed the first balletic swim in a water tank at the New York Hippodrome. In the same year, Reece recorded the highest break at billiards in human history in a marathon event against Joe Chapman who was champion of the Midlands.

The event took place at the Burroughs & Watts Billiard Room in Soho Square Monday and Tuesday, June 03-04, 1907.

### Spectacular Billiards

Reece gained position in the first session and never lost it.

He went on playing the same stroke for five solid weeks and, as admission was free to the public, there was a large gathering on every occasion, both afternoons and evenings.<sup>116</sup>

One of the spectators finally got up the courage to ask Chapman how he liked the billiard table. He responded curtly: 'How the hell should I know. I haven't had a shot for a month!' Thirty years later the sport was headed for the living room.

In 1937 at 3.10pm on April 14 the game played at the Alexandra Palace, London was televised: 'Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen.' Elizabeth Cowell's voice was warm and friendly. 'We are coming to you live from the Alexandra Palace. Tonight we are making history. Our cameramen are about to look down their lenses at a billiard table for the very first time. With me in the studio are Horace Lindrum of Australia and Willie Smith of Darlington. Horace and Willie are going to give us a demonstration.'

In the beginning, lighting was a problem. The lights were so strong that the cushion rails on the table became uncomfortably hot, burning the players' hands and curling the formica at the joints. But it was the two-year-old tantrums that really turned up the heat. Willie Smith was known for his Hewitt

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<sup>116</sup> During this competition Tom Reece used the Anchor stroke. In *Billiards and Snooker for Amateurs* (1948) by Horace Lindrum, Melbourne Inman wrote, 'Wisely, this stroke was barred, and a new rule introduced that, after thirty such cannons, the player must hit a cushion before scoring another cannon. Reece then adopted a new stroke called the 'Pendulum'; the Pendulum stroke was later barred.' pp. 3-4

& Rafter<sup>117</sup> confrontations, and, in front of the cameras, he turned into a proper Orson Welles.<sup>118</sup>

‘You touched the white, Mr. Smith, before it stopped rolling.’

‘I did not,’ Smith retorted turning on the spectators.

‘Don’t sit there like dummies. Did you see me touch the white? Yes or no?’

Horace retired to a quiet corner, leaving Willie to fight it out with the referee whilst the journalists rushed to report:

‘Our Willie is in the wars again!’

Australia’s Horace Lindrum waits patiently for the umpire’s decision.

Tantrums were not the exclusive property of Willie Smith. Melbourne Inman and Tom Reece were fierce combatants. If Reece was responsible for the venue, Inman would tell the press:

‘Bloody place is like an opium den. The cloth is in a terrible state and the cushions are as dead as the mouse in that trap over there.’

If Inman selected the balls, Reece would ask: ‘Where did he get these balls?’

They’re the wrong weight and just look at their colour.’

Tremendous draw-cards, they played to the gallery right to the bitter end.

When Inman passed away, Reece gave a brief interview to the press. In the course of the interview he told a journalist:

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<sup>117</sup> Australian tennis champion Lleyton Hewitt (1981-) – the youngest male to be ranked No. 1 in the World Singles (aged 20) and Australian champion Patrick Michael ‘Pat’ Rafter (1972-), former World No. 1. Rafter won the Men’s Singles at the US Open twice and was twice runner-up at Wimbledon.

<sup>118</sup> American actor, writer, director and producer known for his spectacular tantrums. One of Welles’s more famous tantrums inspired the script for the motion picture *Citizen Kane* (1941). *Citizen Kane* is considered by some critics to be the greatest movie of all time. The film reflects on the life and legacy of Charles Foster Kane and is based on the life of newspaper mogul William Randolph Hearst. Welles took the lead, directed, produced and co-wrote the screenplay with Herman Mankiewicz with whom he argued violently over the plot. Nominated for nine Academy Awards, the film won the award for original screenplay.

‘There’s no way I’m sending flowers. If I send anything, it will be an iron cross to keep the blighter down.’

He then buried himself in a hill of pebbles on Brighton Beach where he spent the night howling his eyes out, which is what we all do when we lose someone we deeply love.

Mac also knew how to throw a temper tantrum.

He stopped twice in the final of the 1951/52 world championship to reprimand the audience. During the first frame, he told a fellow:

‘Sir, if you move again, I’ll have you put out!’

In the tenth frame, he had a go at a woman.

‘Madam, you obviously didn’t hear me when I spoke to that gentleman over there. If you want to riffle in your handbag or unwrap the cellophane on your Iced Mint, for Pete’s sake, go outside and do it.

At the conclusion of the 1936/37 playing season, Horace was on the road again on a tour promoted on the back of his incredible firsts. (First snooker player in history to record world record snooker breaks of 104, 109, 114, 116, 124, 131, 135, 139, 141). But his greatest thrill turned out to be his greatest disappointment. The governing body refused to recognise his break of 141. Horace wrote of this:

Joe Davis and I were playing at Manchester in 1937 before a packed house of two and a half thousand people. The balls broke well for me at the start of the run and as the balls went down, one by one, and my score rose, I could feel the growing tension in the audience. As I neared the century, there was the kind of silence you hear when you know something is about to happen, followed by a murmur as I passed the mark.

When only the pink and black remained, I began to feel the strain. Not a soul moved and I was telling myself to remain calm. The pink went down and there was only one shot left. A straightforward potting black.

I took careful aim for the pocket and, as the ball went in, the entire audience leapt to their feet, cheering, clapping and throwing their hats in the air and all I – the nearly twenty-five year old Australian could do – was feverishly mop my brow.

The bad news arrived a week later.

The governing body rejected Horace's application for break recognition.

Dear Horace,

It is with regret that we must reject your application for recognition.

The billiard table manufacturers and installers of the table, G. H. Lupton & Co., forgot to measure the table with a Control Council template prior to the commencement of play.

Yours sincerely,  
James C. Bisset  
Chairman

An 11-year battle ensued.

Dear Mr. Bisset,

G. H. Lupton & Co., have very kindly presented me with a trophy acknowledging the break, assuring me they are completely satisfied that their table conformed to the standard requirements and are extremely distressed that the Control Council has rejected the original application for recognition on the grounds of a technicality. Accordingly, I respectfully ask that the matter be reviewed.

Yours sincerely,  
Horace Lindrum

But the governing body were not for turning, a decision which brought condemnation from the media all over the world, including the British press who asserted the governing body willfully delayed recognising Horace Lindrum's big breaks to give their own players an opportunity to write those breaks into history.

'England jealous of its records'

*Mirror*, Ref: IV / 48, February 18, 1937.

Some English Press Officials are becoming impatient regarding the British Control Council withholding the certificate of recognition from Horace Lindrum for his world's snooker record of 141.

The Australian has broken the record three times but his name has not yet appeared on the record list. He lifted Davis's figures of 114 to 116 but the effort was not recognized owing to a 'technicality'. On December 11 he made a 131 but a night or two later Sidney Smith got busy and rattled up a 133. Then came Lindrum's 141.

After dilly-dallying, officialdom has intimated it will "consider" the record if Lindrum can satisfy the committee the table was to standard. *Daily Mail* (London) of January 14 is wrathful at the idea that a special table erected for an important match is not being accepted as "standard".

Inman was so outraged by the Council's decision, he funded and promoted Horace's 1937 world tour out of his own pocket, proclaiming in the marketing material: 'Horace Lindrum of Australia is the greatest snooker player I have ever seen.' Inman wasn't the only one to make reference to Horace's extraordinary prowess at the table. At the foot of the last page of his book *Lindrum Billiards* published in 1937 – Walter Lindrum – states:

'The World Snooker Record stands at 141, made by Horace Lindrum in Manchester.' On that note Horace must surely have thought,  
'Everything's going to be Bonza!'

## Chapter Five

### Everything's Going to be Bonza!

During the 'Golden Age of Flight', flying was anything but 'golden'. Flying was dangerous. Poor weather conditions. Unreliable navigational equipment. Costly. Aviation pioneers, the monied, the man or woman with an entrepreneurial spirit and a talent that could take them places, only a small percentage of Australians travelled outside the nation in the old days and most of those travelled by sea.

Much of Horace's travel was by seaplane; a mode of travel known as the luxurious Empire class.<sup>119</sup> The seaplane took twelve days from Australia to the Britain thus 'pilots who represented the nation in international air races and sportsmen such as Horace Lindrum who represented the nation in international competitions became living symbols of the new nation, of the Australian identity and of Australian masculinity.'<sup>120</sup> That reality might offer one explanation as to why many of their stories have been lost to us. Rather than see their stories as the stories of individual lives, we have viewed them as representations of something bigger than themselves. Only in recent times, for example, have we become interested in the individual lives of the Anzacs.

Of course, even when we capture a life per se of a globetrotting pioneer, no one story can ever be expected to contain all of that man or woman's amazing feats and adventures. As Sir Richard Attenborough pointed out in his biographical film *Gandhi*:

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<sup>119</sup> Seaplanes were specifically designed to strengthen ties with the Mother Country, played a critical role in keeping Australia connected during World War II and became the targets of Japanese attacks on Australian soil.

<sup>120</sup> Paul Ashton in Examiner's Report, *The Uncrowned King*, 04 May, 2015.

No man's life can be encompassed in one telling. There is no way to give each year its allocated weight, include each event, each person who helped to shape a lifetime. What can be done is to be faithful in spirit to the record and try to find one's way to the heart of the man.<sup>121</sup>

Which is what I have tried to do here and why the record should contain the following snippets of Horace Lindrum before the history of his life slips into the sands of time and those snippets are lost to us forever.

Ken Shaw, Secretary to the Transvaal Billiards and Snooker Association for thirty-three years<sup>122</sup> wrote:

*The thrill of meeting this dapper little Australian whenever he arrived by air to undertake his playing tours of South Africa will forever live with me. Also the excitement of the audiences as he made his entrance can only be attributed to the special qualities he possessed, a personality all of his own and which, along with his Magic Wand – that shortened cue – leave memories and admiration of one of the Greatest Cue Ball Entertainers of all time.*

*Apart from his cueing ability that drew record audiences in South Africa, there was that special brand of humour and cheer which aided in establishing him as one of the most popular sportsmen of his time and, above all, one of Australia's Greatest Ambassadors. He was a gentleman admired and respected for the consideration he had for his fellow man. Horace played many matches and exhibitions for the under-privileged donating the entire proceeds to assist in aiding their plight.*

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<sup>121</sup> Richard Attenborough's biographical film *Gandhi*, Columbia Pictures in association with Gold Crest Films and National Film Development Corporation of India and Indo-British Films, starring Ben Kingsley (1982).

<sup>122</sup> Ken Shaw also undertook the promotion of professional snooker and billiards competition matches and exhibitions by visiting players in South Africa and Zimbabwe. His letter forms part of the family archive. It is addressed to Suzanne, secretary of the Australian Billiards and Snooker Association.

*As one who had the good fortune to witness numerous century breaks and, to which I must add were compiled under playing conditions that were not always conducive to sizeable breaks, a performance that must be written into history is the one that took place at the German Club in Pretoria on May 16, 1955. Horace compiled his 500th snooker century against the Northern Province champion Doug Lombard, clearing the table with a fast scoring 137. In the following two frames he made breaks of 100 and 103. What makes this feat so remarkable is the fact that it was achieved with the old heavy 'Bonzoline' balls and with such speed.<sup>123</sup>*

T. Eng Chwan, chairman of the Union of Burma Billiards & Control Council had this to say:

*You have distinguished yourself as one of the all time masters of the game. Your great ability, your equally great showmanship and your easy, affable manner, have made you a notable ambassador for billiards and snooker and for your country, Australia. No less than the other great members of the Lindrum family preceding you, you have exemplified all that is best in professionalism and, wherever billiards and snooker are played, the name of Horace Lindrum is an honoured one.<sup>124</sup>*

Suzanne Johnson of the Australian Billiards and Snooker Association dubbed Horace, a credit to the sport of his choice and a most successful roving ambassador for Australia:

*Horace has, of course, visual evidence of this in the many goodwill presentations he has received throughout the world. I recall the occasion when the Prime Minister of*

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<sup>123</sup> Letter written to Suzanne Johnson, secretary of the Australian Billiards & Snooker Association in support of an application for recognition of Horace Lindum's achievements. The letter forms a part of the family archive. The Honours system was under review at the time and the Order of Australia introduced on February 14, 1975, seven months after Horace's death.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

*New Zealand, the Right Honourable Mr. Peter Fraser, and members of the New Zealand Parliament, commissioned the making of a special cue case with an inscribed silver plate affixed. I was present at Parliament House in Wellington when the Prime Minister made the presentation, the theme being not only Horace's tremendous contribution to Australia-New Zealand relations but also to the favourable publicity he generated in the old world for our two countries down under.*

*Horace never hesitated to cheerfully display his great skill and entertainment ability for charitable purposes. He constantly visited hospitals giving exhibitions and, indeed, on the last occasion, met a snooker challenge with New Zealand's leading jockeys captained by Bill Skelton in aid of the well known charity 'Birthright' for crippled and deserving children. The last surviving billiard playing member of the greatest billiard playing family the world has ever seen; a family who, through an incredible five generations, has kept the Australian flag flying high in a global sense; would gladly be claimed in Great Britain, New Zealand, India and South Africa, as one of their own.<sup>125</sup>*

Horace Lindrum played an important role in breaking down the crude racism, sexism, anti-Semitism and class struggle that lay at the heart of amateurism which 'is now happily vanishing.'<sup>126</sup> He believed, for example, amateur players were frequently as capable as professionals. The difference was 'opportunity' to practise, play and compete against players better than themselves. He encouraged women, children (especially disadvantaged children) and disabled persons to pick up their cues, deemed himself fortunate

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<sup>125</sup> Letter written by Suzanne Johnson in her capacity as secretary of the Australian Billiards & Snooker Association to the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Edward Gough Whitlam with copy to the Right Honourable the Premier of the State of New South Wales, Sir Robert Askin, seeking recognition for Horace Lindrum's achievements. The letter forms part of the family archive along with other letters in support. Around the same time, the Association presented Horace with a trophy recognising that he had held the title of Australian professional billiards and snooker champion for over 33 years and they presented Joy Lindrum with a brooch in the shape of a triangle, the triangle is set in rubies, with one diamond, in recognition of her services to the cue sports.

<sup>126</sup> Douglas Booth, Examiner's Report, *The Uncrowned King*, June 05, 2015.

to have had the opportunity to travel, expand his horizons and broaden his perspective on life and saw human beings as equal regardless of sex, race, religion and background. But back to Horace's own story.

1937

.....First ports of call were Malta and Colombo – then it was on to Bombay and a week of exhibitions at the Taj Mahal Hotel.

'What's the Taj like?' Horace asked Inman.

'What's she like! What's she like! Why, my dear boy, she's the playground of Princes. You haven't stayed anywhere until you have stayed at the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel. If you stand at the ship's rail, you will see her swim into view.' Excited, Horace raced to the rail.

'Before the Taj one stayed at Watson's.'

Inman stopped to reflect on fond memories of his stays at Watson's and the hours spent sitting in a vintage wicker on the terrace, sipping Whiskey Sour, reading Somerset Maugham, enjoying the cool air flowing from the overhead fans onto the faces of the pink orchids potted in decorative ceramic pots.

'Good times. They were good times.'

'Do you think there is truth to the saying, people become people through people?' Horace asked. Inman showed surprise. It was a question from left field. 'Yes, I do, Horace. No question about it, the developer of the *Taj* – Jamsetji Tata – found his artistic soul through Robert Knight the editor of the *Times of India*. Whilst the Taj is Tata's great legacy, the legacy belongs just as much to the man with the dream as it does to the man who turned the dream into a reality.'

Horace stretched his imagination about as far as he could stretch it but no stretching of the imagination could have prepared him for his first glimpses of India. As for the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, here was a conceptual design

intelligence far beyond any he had seen before. Stupendous. Iconic. Bold. Adjectives all apt, yet somehow insufficient. There was something – he didn't know what – just something – that set the building apart. A SPARK! A perfect star in a fragment-filled universe. He tried hard to pin-point the something. Was it the onion-shaped domes? The pointed arches? The ribbed spires? The rich earthy colours of the stonework? If you looked at those attributes in isolation the answer was 'No'. He spent time wondering what feature impressed the most, but even this studied contemplation failed to provide him with an answer.

Whatever the 'something' was, the Taj represented a rare sense of beauty rarely found in bricks and mortar. It was the kind of beauty one sees in the rear vision mirror of a future at least a century away. Horace's eyes floated upwards to the underbellies of the structure. Inlaid with gold leaf, the sun was beating down on them, projecting great shards of light onto a blue-curtained Ganges. 'It was the first building in Bombay to be lit by electricity,' Inman added. 'The Grand Ballroom – which is where you will be giving your exhibitions – is supported by the original ten pillars of shorn iron.'

Observing the intensity of expression on Horace's face, Inman smiled.

'What did I tell you!' he exclaimed waving the point of his cane at the Taj.

'Come along, my boy. The playground of Maharajahs awaits.'

He strode off in the direction of the gangplank, his stunning proboscis leading the way.

English butlers with Yorkshire reserve. Turkish baths. Ceiling fans, Victorian round-backs. Priceless antiques in lavishly carved cabinets singing through their lacquer of old man time. The Taj was certainly the palace of princes.

Horace and Inman were greeted on arrival by the hotel manager who advised them that their visit had created great excitement.

‘The exhibitions are a sell-out. Princes and their wives, diplomats, dignitaries and officials will be seated in the first rows. Some six hundred guests behind them. The hotel is now offering standing room only.’

All truly great performances are born out of adversity. On this occasion the fire from the diamond-studded jackets and bejewelled Mumtaz saris exploded in Horace’s lenses and the overhead fans stirred the humidity in the air, steaming up the contact lenses he was wearing underneath. Fortunately, little obstacles like this were nowhere near the distraction to the Maestro as the pieces of eight were to the Black Poker’s needlecraft. Some years later, the Black Poker was darning socks.

‘Do you know anything of these, Horace?’

Cuff links and shirt studs – platinum on onyx – each with thirteen diamonds. She had found them wrapped in a tissue parcel inside the toe of one of the socks. He told her the story. ‘On my first visit to India in 1937 I was invited to play for the Maharajah of Jaipur. At the end of the exhibition, the Maharajah gave me a standing ovation, removed his cuff links and shirt studs, bowed and placed them in my hand. He said:

“Mr. Lindrum, that was the most brilliant exhibition I have ever seen, please accept these as a token of my appreciation. Now, if you will excuse me, I must go and change my shirt”.’

After Bombay, Horace and Inman travelled to Calcutta where Horace had the unique experience of playing on a floating pier. Here, I can boast quite confidently that Horace was one of a handful of sportsmen in the history of sport who was capable of performing under most unusual conditions.

The following letter published in the British magazine *Snooker Scene*<sup>127</sup> is one of many pieces of evidence to that effect.

Dear Sir,

I have been following snooker since 1947 and I would like to tell you a little about it. Over the years I was privileged to see in action some of the greats such as Joe Davis, Horace Lindrum, Rex Williams and Ray Reardon when they were on tour. I was also privileged to see each of them make century breaks.

On one occasion in 1952 Horace Lindrum played at the Modderfontein Club where the table lights were hung from a sprung wooden floor. A lively dance was in progress upstairs causing the ceiling lights to sway backwards and forwards and the shuffling and stamping made the audience in the billiard room feel as if they were sitting beneath a stage during a production of the tap dancing musical *42<sup>nd</sup> Street*.

Hugging his cue – as if it were his dance partner – Horace expertly waltzed around the table to record a 133. Amazing! Something never to be seen again.

Next port of call, Rangoon, and a packed house in the billiard room at The Strand Hotel.

The Chinese champion strode into the room with all the majesty of the mythological Emperor Zhuanxu.<sup>128</sup> Fastidiously dressed, right hand clamped to the handle of his cue case, two determined eyes pinned to a finely-chiseled face surveyed the table. Those eyes told Horace he had a fight on his hands. He was

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<sup>127</sup> A magazine founded by Clive Everton (1937-) Welsh veteran and former BBC snooker commentator (1978-2010), journalist, author and editor.

<sup>128</sup> Zhuanxu is credited with composing the earliest piece of music, "The Answer to the Clouds".

right. His opponent was fast around the table and played with accuracy and precision. A number of times during the match he screwed his ball three-quarters along the length of the cushion and into an end pocket without causing the object ball to cross the table. Only the great possess the know-how to execute shots of that ilk.

Whilst Horace was battling the Chinese Knight of the Cue, Inman was tucking into the Rainbow Trout and Raspberry and Padang Meringues at the Captain's table; his vessel wielding its way across a stormy Indian Ocean on its way to Singapore. When the vessel arrived, Horace was waiting to greet the ship and share the news of his win.

If I could hear Horace talking to me about his first visit to Singapore I envisage him telling me that he was captivated by the architecture of the city. I say this because he was the possessor of a sixth sense. He could see the promise of things to come. My guess is he would also have been captivated by the marketplace where, in those days, mysterious oriental spices, shrimp stock, lard and noodles, bubbled away in giant woks, street vendors hawked brightly coloured wax paper parasols, coolie hats, fried spiders, antelope horns and bouquets of up-side-down chickens and old women sat in doorways juggling dice in tortoise shells.

Penny for your fortune.

Sixpence to wake the dead.

———'I feel at home here,' Horace told Inman as they rode along in a Jinrickshaw manned by a leather-footed man with a smile broader than Glen Lim's *Smiley Canine*.

'I knew you would, my boy. I knew you would.'

Exhibitions at Raffles and the Fullerton followed then it was off to the Philippines.

I had no idea what a Filipino Tinikling dance was so I went to *Memoirs of a Raffles Original*, the work of long-term Front-of-House Manager for the Raffles Hotel, Leslie Danker. The Tinikling apparently involves two people hitting two parallel bamboo poles on the ground and against each other, in rhythmic coordination, with dancers who step over and in-between the poles. I thought it sounded positively dangerous. I was right. There is an element of danger if one missteps and gets one's foot caught between the poles as they clash against each other.<sup>129</sup>

Between swipes with the pole, Inman confided:

'We're going to give the audience some real excitement in Manila, Horace.'

Unbeknown to his protégé, Inman had reached an agreement for the competition matches to be played under the 'Continental rules of billiards' as well as under the 'English rules'.

'You've done what!' Horace couldn't believe what he was hearing.

'Don't worry, old boy, with a few hours practice, you'll be fine. Best keep your eyes on the pole.'

Miraculously, Horace managed to retain his good humour and hold his own on the dance floor and at the table. That was no mean feat. Continental billiards is a very different game from English billiards. It is played on a much smaller, pocketless table and, whilst carom or carombole is a member of the billiards family, the sports are 'poles' apart, requiring radically different skills sets.

In billiards, the general object of the player is to point score by striking one ball against another with the aim of either propelling one or both of them into a pocket or, with one ball, to strike two others successively, that is to 'cannon'. In carom, the object is to carom one's own cue-ball off the opponent's cue-ball and object-ball in a single shot.

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<sup>129</sup> Leslie Danker, *Memoirs of a Raffles Original*, (Raffles Hotel, Singapore: Angsana Books, 2010), 86.

To be proficient at either billiards or carom requires the cultivation of touch and the cultivation of touch on a billiard or carom table is best compared with the cultivation of touch on an upright piano versus the cultivation of touch on a Grand. The touch for the “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B”<sup>130</sup> being different to the touch for “The Moonlight Sonata”.<sup>131</sup> The bridge of the hand is different. The lift of the arms is different. The fingers play differently upon the keys. The Filipino champion didn’t take too kindly to the British rules. ‘British bloody madness!’ That’s how he described it to the press but, madness or no, like Peppy playing at the Bijou, Inman’s idea captured the imagination and – for the artist – capturing the imagination of the audience is all that ever matters.

Final engagements in the region were at the fabulous Eastern & Oriental, Penang, Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur. The exhibition in Kuala Lumpur included a performance for His Royal Highness the Sultan of Malaysia who was a billiards buff, so fascinated by the science and exquisite technicalities of the sport, his eyes remained glued to the table. Horace recorded the event, describing how resplendent the King looked in his Muskat (traditional costume).

On his head, the King wore the Tengkolok (headdress). Embroidered with gold thread, a diamond-studded crescent-shaped ornament and fourteen-point star was affixed at the front. At the centre of the star, the crest of Malaysia. Attached to a ruby-studded waist buckle, the Royal Keris (short sword) with gold decorated sheath and the Keris Panjang (long sword) with ivory hilt.

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<sup>130</sup> Closely based upon an earlier song. “Beat me Daddy, Eight to the Bar” by Don Raye , “Boogie, Woogie, Bugle Boy from Company B” by Don Raye & Hughie Prince was first recorded at Decca’s Hollywood studios on January 2, 1941 (nearly a year before the United States entered World War II) by The Andrew Sisters; von Trapp children, Katy Perry, Keri Hilson and Jennifer Nettles. In the same year, The Andrew Sisters introduced the song in the Abbott and Costello motion picture *Buck Privates*.

<sup>131</sup> Piano Sonata Number 14 in C-sharp minor Opus 27, No. 2, “Quasi una fantasia”, more commonly known as “The Moonlight Sonata”, composed by Ludwig van Beethoven and dedicated to his pupil, Countess Giulietta Guicciardi (1802).

Australia, New Zealand, Vancouver, Toronto and across country to New York, they arrived on the eve of the World Baseball series. Newsstands hummed with stories of the Clipper and the Invisible Ray, crowded horse cars pushed along roadways between Sunshine cabs, Humbacks and Cabriolets and, writ large across the skyline of this fascinating urban landscape, neon signs flashing Ballantine's Beer, Kamels and "The Great Ziegfeld".

Horace said the wait for table service at the popular Naples Clam Bar was more than an hour and it was about the same at the 25-cent spaghetti diner around the corner but nobody seemed to mind. People chatted and laughed and tried not to succumb to the delicious smells of doughnut, pretzel, whole hogs with carolina mustard, fried goats cheese with jalapeno and Polish dog in freshly-baked bread roll doused in hot sauce, pickle and sauerkraut.

'When the Clipper made his first home run there was one almighty roar and I reckon you could hear that roar on the other side of the Atlantic.' The excitement with which Horace relayed his memories of the New York experience made me think if he had been born in the USA he would have played baseball not billiards. He'd have made a bloody good Lou Gehrig<sup>132</sup>.

Next highlight, a marvellous trick-shot display by the famous and talented, Willie Hoppe.<sup>133</sup> Hoppe was one of Horace's childhood heroes. He was also the subject of many a university thesis. A group of Princeton Professors believed Hoppe's incredible skill was due to his eyes having a peculiar faculty for measuring angles with mathematical precision.

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<sup>132</sup> Lou Gehrig (1903-1941), 'Buster Gehrig', American baseball player who played first baseman for seventeen seasons of major league baseball for the New York Yankees and earned the nickname 'The Iron Horse'. Gehrig was the ultimate professional who conducted himself, throughout his career, with dignity.

<sup>133</sup> Eighteen-year-old Willie Hoppe defeated the great French billiardist Maurice Vignaux in a world record-breaking billiards final in the ballroom of the Grand Hotel in Paris on January 15, 1906. The purse was one thousand dollars. An absolute fortune in those days.

Not all went to plan. Hoppe was caught telling a common fly to ‘Bugger off’. In the middle of a masse shot<sup>134</sup>, a fly landed on his cue ball. Hoppe paused, hoping to God the damn thing would just leave. When it refused to budge the referee shooed it with his silk handkerchief. Alas, the moment Hoppe’s cue went up in the air, down came the fly.

Once again, the referee intervened and the fly returned. This time, circling around and around and around before coming in for a landing. The spectators, joining in on the fun, wielded hats, score-cards and newspapers in a series of threatening gestures that might have scared an elephant but did absolutely nothing to scare the fly.

No less than eighteen times the cue went up until Dickey of the Bronx Bombers gave it one almighty WHACK.

‘Ladies and gentlemen, I give you, the Yankee fly’, he proclaimed, a big grin on his cheeky face.

Marcel Camp – hallowed champion of Detroit – was Horace’s next opponent then it was George Chenier, champion of Canada.

‘You know why I love the billiard room, Horace?’ Chenier asked. ‘Let me tell you why I love the billiard room. The billiard room is like a hotel. Both excellent destinations for the study of human nature.’

‘You can learn a lot from watching people’, Horace agreed.

‘It don’t matter where the room is – city, province, north, south, east, west,’ Chenier continued. ‘You’ll find the same generous impulses or petty meannesses or the same business-like keenness or happy-go-lucky disregard. You’ll see the quick thinker whose mind is made up as he walks toward his ball or the slow thinker who gets his ball, then chinks his cue, has a look around the room, chinks his cue, has another look around the room, chinks his cue – you

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<sup>134</sup> An extreme form of swerve played with an almost vertical strike, usually used to avoid a snooker; to cannon around obstructing balls to pot the ball being struck into a pocket.

know the kind. Then, when he finally gets down to his stroke – just as the audience and his opponent are breathing a huge sigh of relief – he gets up and goes through the whole process again – ultimately playing the shot you had arranged for him in your mind before he went down the first time.

You see the workman, a plain ball striker, steady and difficult to beat and the man who never goes straight to his objective. You see the university student – the little storehouse of knowledge ready to button-hole his professors. You see the old codger courting his medals from Ashanti and Tel-El-Kehir.” I cannot play a stroke these days,” he tells you. “I never get any practice. My right arm is semi-paralyzed and I can’t see the length of the table.” You take pity on him, give him a start whereupon he thrashes you within an inch of your life.’

The conversation moved to the profile of the cue sports.

‘Let’s consider, for a moment, Horace, the bad publicity the games get at times. I don’t want to sound as if I’m preaching the Gospel but I think the cue sports are a reflection of the schizophrenic personality of man. No fault lies with the sports for they are highly intelligent and demanding arts. No, the fault lies in man. Shakespeare got that one right. The fault lies with the player who regards the table as something purchased at a sixpenny store. Cocky, this fellow bounces the balls, drags his sticky fingers along the cloth, over-chalks his cue. Uses enough chalk to chalk every cue in town. Calls for a cigarette. (Now we have chalk and ash on the cloth). Later stubs out his cigarette on the floor, bangs down his cue, natters to spectators and brags about his imaginary conquests.’ Horace made no comment. He didn’t need to. Chenier was simply describing reality.

The trip home was first class aboard the *Bremen*. Built to delight Kaiser and King, *Bremen*<sup>135</sup> was renowned for its spectacularly opulent hospitality, barber shop and mail service. The vessel ended up at the epicenter of a major

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<sup>135</sup> Constructed from 7000 tons of high-strength steel, *SS Bremen* was built by the German company Deutsche Schiffund Maschinbau for the Norddeutscher Lloyd line to work on the transatlantic sea route.

controversy when anti-Nazi protestors boarded her and ripped the Nazi flag from the jackstaff. Hitler did not take kindly to the assault, proclaiming the flag the 'official' flag of Germany.

Back in the UK, Horace kicked off the winter season with a week of snooker at the Albert Institute in Leeds. His opponent was a leading British professional snooker champion Sidney Smith. Smith was the first player in history to make a total clearance in snooker competition with a break of 136 recorded in a final against Joe Davis in 1939. There was some pretty exciting match play over this period and a rather fancy prize for the highest break. Lord Milton, later Earl Fitzwilliam donated a personal cigarette case, quite something in the days when audiences went gooey over Bogart puffing on a Black Cat<sup>136</sup> in movies like *The Maltese Falcon*.<sup>137</sup>

At the first session, Sidney Smith completed a break of 120 and it seemed he had the prize in the bag. Then, at the last session, Horace took several reds and, when the remaining balls split nicely, he realised there was a chance of a higher break. The points began to mount, as did the tension. Horace didn't always find it easy to remain cool. He didn't like the pressure of competition. However, on this occasion, he found himself very much in control finally clearing the table with a break of 130.

The prize is an important piece of family memorabilia. It was donated by Peter-Wentworth Fitzwilliam (the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl Fitzwilliam) who was romantically linked to Kathleen 'Kick' Cavendish, one of President John F. Kennedy's sisters.

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<sup>136</sup> Named after a black cat that sat regularly on the window-sill of the Carreras' Wardour Street shop, Black Cat cigarettes were introduced into the United Kingdom by Carrera Ltd. in 1904. The Wardour Street shop came to be known as the 'Black Cat' shop.

<sup>137</sup> A detective novel written by Dashiell Hammett originally serialised in the September issue of the *Black Mask* (magazine), *The Maltese Falcon* (1929) inspired a cinematic masterpiece by the same name. Released in 1941, director John Huston's directorial debut classic was nominated for three Academy Awards. Dubbed the first major film noir by Panorama du film noir, the film starred actors Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre and Elisha Cook Jr.

Unable to escape the 'Kennedy curse', they were both killed in an air crash in France in 1948.

'Australia's Horace Lindrum reaches another final with our Joe.'

It was months before the big broadcaster slipped in any mention of the storm clouds building on the horizon and, when they eventually wrote a tit-bit into history, nobody took much notice. Not at the beginning. Why would they take any notice? The smiles and the handshakes were saying 'No worries, mate. Everything is going to be Bonza!'

On that note, Horace and Inman set out on another tour of the Continent, landing in Bergen and picking up a Rolls-Royce Phantom II<sup>138</sup> for the drive to Oslo. In Oslo they were guests of the Texaco Oil Company and gave the first of a series of exhibitions for the company's employees before driving to Gothenburg, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Bremen. By the time the Phantom reached Essen it was flying a spectacular array of flags and pennants; the Southern Cross and Union Jack strategically placed either side of Syke's "Spirit of Ecstasy".<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> The 'Continental' model or Phantom II was designed by Ivan Evenden but, at first, the design did not capture the imagination of the Rolls-Royce sales department. Attitudes changed when the department learned of Evenden's Grand Prix d'Honneur win at the "Biarritz Grand Concours a'Elegance" (1930). On his return to the factory he found the sales brochure ready to go. Featured in the motion pictures *The Yellow Rolls-Royce* (1964), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (2010), the distinguishing features of this model were the short wheelbase and stiffer, five-leaf springs.

<sup>139</sup> Designed by British sculptor, Charles Robinson, and, originally, dubbed "The Whisperer", "The Spirit of Ecstasy" carries with it the story of a secret love affair between John Walter Edward Douglas-Scott-Montagu (the second Baron Montagu of Beaulieu from 1905) – a pioneer of the motor vehicle industry – and Eleanor Velasco, the editor of *The Car Illustrated* magazine (from 1902), who was the model for the work. "The Spirit of Ecstasy" is also known as "The Flying Lady" and "The Silver Lady". The artifact features a woman leaning forwards with her arms outstretched behind her, the billowing cloth flowing from her arms to her back resembles wings. Eleanor Velasco died on December 30, 1915. A passenger aboard the *SS Persia*, the vessel was torpedoed by a German U-boat. The love affair between Douglas-Scott-Montagu and Velasco was kept secret for over a decade due to Velasco's poor financial circumstances.

The boys had stayed with Inman's old friend, Herr Berlingroahdt at 3 Hans Neymeyer Strasser a number of times but this time Berlingroahdt was not his usual jovial self. He kept telling them how things had changed. He didn't want to worry them but they should be mindful. 'It seems we have swapped the clockwork turning of the German National dance for the thud, thud, thud of army boots.'

En route from Dresden to Munich, Herr Berlingroahdt's words took on real meaning. Beer houses once filled with the music of Romberg's *Student Prince*<sup>140</sup> were now overflowing with poker-faced men dressed in brown dungarees shouting Heil Hitler!

'Something must be done about this,' Horace said to himself, but those in power rarely listen to the thoughts of extraordinary men and women. Not until it's too late.

In Berlin the Phantom was vandalised. The pennants ripped off, torn, shredded and thrown in the gutter. The flags, burned. Gigantic swastikas were painted on the doors.

'I say! This is rather unpleasant. Not what I'd call Fair Play.'

What shall we do, young Horace?

'Roll up our sleeves and get on with it, Mel,' Horace responded.

They cleaned down the doors – restoring the Phantom to its former glory – pulled spare flags and pennants from the boot, redecorated the vehicle and drove to refugee camps where they picked up their cues and performed for intellectuals like historian, Braudel, who wrote the first draft of his masterpiece, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, in a war camp. At each exhibition, Horace and Inman raised the Union Jack and the

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<sup>140</sup> *The Student Prince* is an operetta in four acts based upon the play *Old Heidelberg* written by Wilhelm Meyer-Forster with music by Sigmund Romberg and lyrics by Dorothy Donnelly. The work was first performed at Jolson's 59th Street Theatre on Broadway, December 2, 1924.

Southern Cross and sang their national anthems. Neither could sing particularly well. Both received an electrifying: *Ich habe einen kameraden*. Braudel was right when he wrote: 'The historian can never get away from the question of time in history. Time sticks to his thinking like soil to a gardener's spade.'

Six weeks later Neville Chamberlain went on his most important mission to meet Hitler. The mission failed. After that, Kahal and Fain's "I'll be seeing you in all the old familiar places"<sup>141</sup> topped the charts and Horace and Inman found themselves on the last train out of Germany.

'Heil Hitler! Ausweis bitte' (Passports please).

Checking the documents, the officer looked first at the faces, then at the photos. He repeated this action three times before handing the passports back to them.

'Danke schon.'

'Excuse me, Officer, how many miles is it to the next station?' Horace asked.

'Thirty-two kilometres,' he replied. 'From now on you will speak only in kilometres.'

"Heil Hitler"

He clicked his heels and moved to the next carriage.

'Where does the world go from here?' Mel asked.

Horace knew the answer.

Language had shifted from Art to Science.

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<sup>141</sup> Music by Sammy Fain and lyrics by Irving Kahal, "I'll be seeing you" was first published in 1938. The song became an anthem for British and American soldiers serving abroad.

## Chapter Six

### Joy's Journey

The White family purchased a compact radio in 1938. They were huddled around that radio on September 3, 1939. Neville Chamberlain's words sent shock-waves through their household and through nations across the globe. In Australia, Prime Minister Robert Menzies delivered the call to arms and Australia's finest responded. One of those was Horace Lindrum.

Rozemai raised her eyebrows and glanced across at Arthur who was slumped in his chair, hands locked. 'The Great War. The Great Depression. You and I have been looking down the barrel of financial ruin for I don't know how long. Will there ever be an end to it?'

Strange as it might seem their youngest was thrilled at the prospect of a full-frontal attack on Hitler. There'd been talk of it for months and there was something euphoric in the reality. The euphoria was short-lived. Rozemai was frank. She'd seen it all before. She knew what to expect, or she thought she did. 'Survival is dependent upon being prepared. If the war is not settled quickly, your father and I will find ourselves out of work. Within six to twelve months everything will be rationed. Meat, eggs, fats, cheese, bacon, sugar, milk, sweets, soap, rice, bananas and oranges will be considered luxuries and will be in very short supply. Fruit and rice supplies that become available to us will be passed to you, Dorrie, for my grandchildren. Rice builds bone and we can't have the children growing up not knowing what a banana or orange looks like. I want you to start using things sparingly. Every ounce of toothpaste is to be squeezed from the tube. We cannot afford to waste anything.'

She turned to Joy.

'I know how much you love your dramatic studies, my darling. However, we now need to watch every penny.'

Reality kicked in after the family had gone to bed.

'I wonder what the future has in store?' Joy asked herself as she lay looking up at the ceiling. She told Jesus she didn't want to give up her drama lessons. She didn't think that was fair. Before she went to sleep her mind travelled to the place where the seeds of her love of drama were planted. Fortescue Primary school on the opening night of *The Mad Hatter's Tea Party*. The Dormouse failed to show. Where do you get a Dormouse at short notice. 'Joy White is small enough to fit the costume.' That performance turned into a burning passion to tread the boards. Writing came to fill the void. In the beginning she wrote feverishly in a diary. Later she wrote short stories, articles and collections of anecdotes. Her work has served a great purpose and her pieces of wisdom represent a meticulous record of a truly remarkable life. Without her work I would not be telling you this story.

When Joy woke the following morning, all she could think was: Damn you, Mr. Hitler!

Prior to the announcement of war Joy worked part-time in her mother's beauty salon. The appointment book was always pretty full, particularly during holiday periods, so the extra pair of hands were welcome. Joy's step-sister – Dorris Fry – was the apprentice. Dorris was the daughter of Rozemai's first husband, Private Frederick William Fry of the Middlesex Regiment. Private Fry was killed in a desert flank attack. Legend has it he was flung from his horse. Rozemai knew Frederick was dead before the Scroll arrived. Like Caesar's wife, she had a premonition.

Joy's school chums envied her. They saw their friend as a new age woman and thought her lucky to work in her mother's salon but Joy didn't see

anything 'new age' in mixing white henna<sup>142</sup> and pasting it on somebody's head. There was only one thing worse, getting cups of tea and coffee for snotty-nosed customers who complained if you dribbled milk in the saucer.

The last straw was the sniggering over her father's dug-out. 'It's taking up half their garden. Concrete this thick. What can the man be thinking! I'm pleased we don't live next door. Imagine waking up in the morning and pulling your curtains to a view of that monstrosity.' Rozemai jumped to Arthur's defence:

'Hitler is not going to stop at Czechoslovakia.'

'Rubbish, my dear. Look at this photo of Edward and Adolf. The lovely smiles on their faces.' The customer pointed at the picture of the King and Hitler, front and centre, shaking hands.

Joy bit her tongue and disappeared into the storeroom with a copy of the *Mitcham News and Mercury*.

Wanted: Junior clerk for a business house in Streatham Vale

'I could do that,' she said to herself. 'I'll ask Mum for the time off to go to the pictures with my friends.'

Later that day she searched through her sister's wardrobe looking for something suitable to wear for the interview. Dorrie was a lot taller than Joy so the sleeves of the jacket she selected needed to be turned at the cuff and the skirt needed to be hoisted at the waistband. Mr. Leach thought she was a nice, polite little girl. He quizzed her on her age. 'You are fourteen?' Joy crossed her fingers behind her back. 'Yes, Sir.' It was only a little lie. In less than a twinkle, she closed the chapter entitled 'childhood', crossed the bridge and embarked on the first of two pathways that would teach her the art and importance of preserving history.

On return home she found her father relaxed over a cup of tea.

'You're home early, love.'

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<sup>142</sup> Magnesia, sodium perborate and peroxide.

'Mum gave me the day off to go to the pictures. I didn't go to the pictures, Daddy, I went for a job interview.'

'You did what?'

'I got a job.'

'Job! What sort of job?'

'Office work at Marco Refrigerators. You have to understand, Daddy, hairdressing is not for me. I start at 9.00am Monday morning. The salary is sufficient to help you and Mummy and pay for my drama lessons.'

'You're not yet fourteen. What about your schooling? And, what on earth will your mother say! You better think seriously about what you are going to say to your mother and you owe her an apology for not telling her the truth. Best set the table for dinner then run up stairs and remove that make-up.'

Rozemai and Dorrie arrived home at 6.30pm.

From the laughter at the gate Arthur could tell they were in good humour.

'Thank the Lord,' he said to himself.

'We're home, love.'

'Sherry in the parlour, my dear.'

Arthur waited for Rozemai to relax.

'I, ah, today, well, you know there comes a time, when...'

Rozemai couldn't stop laughing.

'Did you hear that, Dorrie? Joy has got herself a job for the August holidays.'

Joy wanted to explain the position was permanent but her father stopped her with a look that said: 'Be quiet. Your mother will find out soon enough.'

Monday morning Joy waited until her mother and sister had left the house before she came down stairs to say goodbye. In her peplum skirt and cloche hat, she looked a tad too grown up. But Arthur didn't say anything. He accepted his daughter's fierce ambition to go places. A year later, Joy stepped

up the ladder into a secretarial position in the offices of Mr. Stephen Chart the Town Clerk at the Mitcham Council<sup>143</sup> and, after business hours, she was making a name for herself in the theatre.

*Variety Magazine: SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD, JOYCE WHITE, is a youngster the film magnets are bound to snap up...* is the headline that hit the front page of *Variety* the day Horace and Inman boarded the last train out of Germany. The Declaration of War came forty-eight hours after their arrival in Aden. Inman got on the phone and made immediate arrangements for a return to the United Kingdom. Horace purchased a seat on the first available flight home to Sydney. Days after his arrival he set to work raising money for the War effort.

On Tuesday October 1, 1940, the *Manilla Express* reported:

A very large number of billiards enthusiasts gathered at the Mechanics' Institute on Friday night to witness an artistic display of billiards and snooker by Horace Lindrum. Possibly of all the champions in action today none can delight the billiard public better than Horace Lindrum. His game is simplicity itself, and his general mastery of strength and touch in all-round play commands a host of admirers from across the globe.

Lindrum, who is still on the youthful side of thirty, is a quiet unassuming young man. His worldwide fame and success against the best of players has not swayed his mental balance. To all he is just Horace Lindrum, the billiard champion.

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<sup>143</sup> Originally fertile, farmlands, Mitcham is located 11.6km south-west of Charing Cross in the district of south London within the borough of Merton bounded by the London boroughs of Wandsworth, Croydon, Lambeth and Sutton. The Wandle river bounds the town to the southwest. The word 'Mitcham' is old English for 'Big settlement' and evidence of a Celtic settlement was found in the area. Poet John Donne, brilliant scholar and explorer, Sir Walter Raleigh – famous, amongst other things, for his chivalry – laying his expensive cape over a puddle so as to ensure Queen Elizabeth I's shoes were not sullied – and Vice Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton all owned property in Surrey.

January 06, 1942      Lindrum enlists...

Twenty-nine-year-old Sapper Lindrum enlisted in the Royal Australian Engineers at Millers Point, Sydney yesterday and was allocated Army Number N181304. Sometime around midday he was dispatched to Tamworth.

18 months later...

Honourably discharged on medical grounds, Lindrum will serve out the war raising money for disabled servicemen and women.

What did Horace have to say of his time in the Army?

‘Against those six footers, I was far better with a cue than a screwdriver! But boxer Tommy Burns and I did our bit peeling potatoes in the mess.’

Worlds were blown apart before anybody picked up a Springfield. Lack of customers saw Rozemai close the doors to the hairdressing salon. A few weeks later, Arthur boarded up the butcher shop. Three incomes wiped out overnight. Arthur applied for a government job and was appointed meat inspector at the Smithfield markets.<sup>144</sup> The off-cuts carried the family through

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<sup>144</sup> Situate in the ward of Farringdon at the City of London’s northwest in central London, land ‘use’ for market purposes can be traced to rights granted under Charter from King Edward III in 1327. Buildings were commissioned by City architect, Sir Horace Jones, in 1866 and completed in 1868. Ten lives were lost and massive damage occasioned to the buildings when a V-2 rocket struck in 1945. During the war years secret scientific experiments were conducted in a refrigerated meat locker in the butcher’s basement. Led by Dr. Max Perutz, the experiments were on Pykrete – a mixture of ice and wood pulp – which was believed to be tougher than steel. The experiments were later abandoned.

the war years. Joy's position at the Council put her in the ballot for two ten-yard allotments. Allotments (market gardens) offered families the only opportunity to put fresh fruit and vegetables on the table. Establishing them was blistering work. You needed to dig down two spits through soil that was rock-hard and starved of all nourishment. But, despite the poor condition of the soil, many of these gardens still bear fruit and vegetables.

Aside from establishing allotments, hoarding food and practicing survival plans, not a great deal happened in the first few months following Chamberlain's announcement. Parroting 'Have you got your gas mask' was about the extent of it. A year later the Bill Posters came along and slapped up the warnings. 'Beware in a Blackout' was the first to go up. After that sign went up, the man in the street knew things were getting serious.

Inside households, family members were delegated specific tasks. In the White household Joy was responsible for the dug-out clothing, Dorrie was responsible for the first-aid kit, the portable radio, candles, matches and torches, Rozemai was responsible for the food supply. Bread and dripping, Marie biscuits, a flask of tea and Lemon Barley water. Arthur was keeper of the metal box containing important documents, ration books and national identity cards.

At the first sound of the sirens, the family proceeded immediately to the bomb shelter. Sirens at 6.00pm meant hours of sitting on concrete or lying on a straw mattress (a straw mattress was known as a *palliasse*), breathing stale air and praying for it all to end. Yet, palpable as it was, the experience bonded people. Men shared their Great War stories. Women exchanged recipes for sponge cakes made with the smallest amount of butter and dried egg. Children played Tiddlywinks.<sup>145</sup> All learned to laugh.

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<sup>145</sup> Tiddlywinks is a game of skill. The aim of the game is two-fold; to pot your small plastic discs into a pot using what is known as a Squidger (disc) and to prevent your opponents discs from reaching the pot.

Meat was strictly rationed. Arthur managed a leg of lamb once a fortnight and Rozemai learned to spread that lamb like butter. When there was no lamb, there was spam, liver, ox tongue, tripe and pig's trotter washed down with a cup of Nestle condensed milk. Rozemai tried to vary the diet. She even experimented with whale meat but the smell of it proved too much for her. It also proved too much for the golden-haired Spaniel Joy won in the 'Funds for Warship Week' raffle.

How they all laughed about the Spaniel with the big feet. Joy had never won anything in a raffle. Then she goes and wins another mouth to feed the day after the strict rationing announcement! Munch was his name or was it Merlin. Whatever his name, the family managed the extra mouth. God knows how they did it. Some say it was good old Cockney humour. Whatever the truth, Spring came without blossom, it took Munch and it took old man youth before his time.

By the summer of 1941 'You know the procedure' was rolling off the English tongue like a Gracie Field's melody. A sort of "Wish me Luck as you wave me goodbye"<sup>146</sup> between the TING-A-LING. TING-A-LING of ambulances and the ZOOM...BANG of beetle bombs. Defense installations were prime targets. So, too, were the industrial towns. Coventry and the Midlands took a real bashing. Hitler's order was to break morale.

On September 7...a shelf cloud formed on the horizon.

Behind the shelf three hundred and forty-eight bombers and six hundred and seventeen fighter planes. At high noon, a terrible nothingness. At 4-00pm, a deafening drone. 'Luftwaffe. Luftwaffe overhead.' In the half-light children clambered atop bomb shelters and yelled: 'Go that way! Go that way!'

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<sup>146</sup> A song by Harry Parr-Davies performed by Gracie Fields in the motion picture *Shipyard Sally* (1939).

## CALL-UP TIME

### Volunteer or be drafted

Rozemai couldn't bear the thought of Joy joining the WAFS and being posted overseas so she pleaded with her daughter to volunteer for the Land Army.

———'There's the paperwork, love.'

The sergeant directed Joy to a small desk near the window. Joy fumbled with the forms. Lodging the papers, would top off what had started as a bad day. The alarm didn't ring. It was freezing outside. The taps had frozen in the bathroom. Now it was snowing. Before the day was out the sleet would set in. Back at the Council, Stephen Chart was arguing with someone on the telephone. 'Look,' Joy heard him scream into the mouthpiece. 'I've received instructions to turn Mitcham Common into an agricultural area. I need Miss White's help to execute this plan.' His pleadings and protestations failed.

Dear Miss White,

Please be advised that, immediately after the Mitcham Fair, you will proceed post haste to Plumpton Agricultural College, where you will learn how to milk a cow and drive a tractor and, from there you will be taken to the Estate of Sir John Leigh at Witley Park near Godalming in Surrey.

Friday August 28, 1941.  
'Jolly time at Woodlands'  
*Mitcham News and Mercury*

If you were not present at 'Woodlands', Commonside East, last Saturday, I feel sorry for you because the event was a treat. The sideshows were particularly well-patronised. Dunk the Mayor was the top money-spinner.

Joy White is to be congratulated.  
Oh – by the way – Happy nineteenth, Officer White.

Fete over, Joy followed orders. Shortly after arriving at Sir John Leigh's estate she had a chance meeting with a man who played a pivotal role in her life. Her diary set it out:

Mr. Bisset is a regular visitor to the Estate. He gets up early each morning to observe the bird life. The Egyptian Goose<sup>147</sup> and the Goldeneye<sup>148</sup> are his particular favourites. His observations are recorded in the *Field* magazine.

'There are three things I can't pass up,' he told me.  
'The first is studying bird life. The second is a game of cricket on the Village Green. The third is a game of billiards.' He is the chairman of the British Billiards Association & Control Council.

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<sup>147</sup> A member of the duck, goose and swan family. Considered sacred by the ancient Egyptians.

<sup>148</sup> A medium-sized sea duck.

### New Set of Orders

Dear Miss. White,

You will leave Sir John Leigh's estate at the end of the week. You are now required to attend for night duty at the Foreign Office on the Thames Embankment.

Arthur and Rozemai were not happy. The most dangerous times were at night and they feared for their daughter's safety.

### Night One

I sat on a lounge, drinking tea and staring out the window. It was raining. Over the last few weeks it had rained continuously. Grey clouds. Grey chatter. Ear to the ground. Beware! Beware!

'Silk stockings, Miss? Five coupons for the fully-fashioned type.'

'I'll take five pairs.'

I succumbed to the salesmanship of the Oxford Street black marketeer only to discover the stockings had a beautiful seam up the front!

'Would you like to read a book? There's a copy of Neville Shute's *What Happened to the Corbetts*<sup>149</sup> in the cabinet over there and, if you spin the dial on the radio, you will catch *ITMA* with Tommy Handley.'<sup>150</sup>

I went to open my mouth but the passer-by scurried away.

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<sup>149</sup> Written in 1938 and published by William Hieneman Ltd. the following year, the novel is a critique on the aftermath of the bombing raids on the British maritime city of Southampton in the early part of World War II.

<sup>150</sup> British comedian Thomas Reginald 'Tommy' Handley (1892-1949), best remembered for the BBC comedy series *ITMA* which inspired a film by the same name (1942).

## Night Two

‘Who are they?’ I asked the secretary, nodding towards the fellows standing in the back office. I could see the men clearly through the glass and they could see me watching them. In their dark suits and heavy-framed spectacles they looked pretty scary. The secretary mumbled something but I couldn’t hear what she said and before I could say ‘I beg your pardon’ she had picked up her notepad and disappeared.

## Night Three – The interrogation started.

What do you do in your spare time?

Do you belong to any organisations?

What do you think about the war?

Do you have many friends?

Who are your friends?

What do your friends do?

Where do your friends live?

Where was your mother born?

Tell us about your father and your sister’s husband?

None of it made sense, but Joy was young and it is sometimes easier to understand the cloak and dagger later in life. What was the reality? If you believe reality exists, the reality was the Government needed people it could trust and the fact that Joy’s great-uncle was Field Marshal Sir George White the defender of Ladysmith probably said she was prepared to tackle the enemy.

Two weeks later Joy was given her directions:

‘Miss White, we are sending you to Bletchley Park. You will need to take clothing and personal belongings. Don’t expect to go home every weekend. You will receive the rest of your orders on your arrival. Good luck.’

Joy followed orders and boarded the Northampton train from Euston. To Bletchley Park via Milton Keynes and Leighton Buzzard. When the train arrived at Bletchley Park she alighted to an empty platform. She’d been told to walk up and over the pedestrian bridge to the front entry of the station and through the car park where she would find a small dwelling surrounded by a paling fence with a brass plaque inset into the red brick engraved with the words, ‘Stationmaster’s cottage’.

The shades were drawn and there were no lights on inside the house, not that Joy could see. She opened the gate, walked to the front door and knocked. No answer. She knocked again. A little louder this time. The door opened and an elderly man materialised holding a lantern with the tiniest of candles burning inside it.

‘Can you direct me to Blet.....’

‘Shush!’ he said pussyfooting around the door.

‘Name?’

‘Joyce White.’

‘Wait over there.’ He pointed to a crate then raced back inside the house and shut the door behind him.

Ten minutes later, two vehicles arrived. A civilian Jeep and a Maudslay Standard 12 4-door saloon. ‘Station X,’ the stationmaster directed. On arrival, the driver of the CJ flashed his lights and two metal gates opened revealing a

long driveway with huts on either side. A walled community, the Estate had the feel of a mental asylum.

‘What do they do here?’ Joy wondered.

The vehicles came to a stop inside a turning circle in front of a Gothic-style mansion surrounded by rockeries and rose gardens, two stone gargoyles guarding the entrance.

Admiral Sinclair purchased the mansion at Bletchley in the spring of 1938. Like Arthur and his dug-out, Sinclair had been publicly ridiculed for expressing his concerns about Hitler. He fought his way up the chain of command at the Foreign Office arguing Britain needed an intelligence base and Bletchley Park was ideal for the purpose. He faced a wall of opposition. ‘The War Office is responsible for war. Go ask the General.’

‘Look, old chap, as a former director of naval intelligence, you should know to go to the Admiral.’

‘I say, Sinclair, you are a part of the Foreign Office. I suggest you go ask the Mandarins.’

Churchill was right: ‘It would be a great reform if wisdom could be made to spread as rapidly as folly!’

——— ‘Miss White, welcome to Bletchley Park, I am Captain Bradshaw, pleased to meet you. Follow me, please. John will look after your luggage.’

Joy climbed out of the car and followed Bradshaw through a verandah arch and into a hallway of timbered-panelled walls and ceilings leading down to an elaborate staircase lit by a mullion-and-transom window.

‘Wait here,’ he ordered, disappearing into a room on the left, only to reappear seconds later in the company of Commander Edward Travis.

‘Miss White, I am pleased to meet you. I am Commander Travis. Now, if you will come with us, we will get the formalities out of the way. Would you like a cup of tea?’

‘No, thank you, Commander.’

‘Righto, then, down to business. We have arranged for you to stay with Kittie Hearne in the village. Kittie has kindly made available a nice single room. There is only one bathroom. I am sure you can manage. Everything is there for you to use, so make yourself as comfortable as possible.

There are only a few of us at present. Around two hundred. We are expected to grow to around three and a half thousand. Sixty WRENS recently moved into Woburn Abbey. They are a great bunch. Word of advice, they are very good dart players so if you are going to take them on, be prepared. The Chintz wallpaper in their quarters is already looking a bit the worse for wear.

No mail is delivered here. Letters to and from your family are delivered and/or collected by the Military.’

He paused for a moment before continuing.

‘This is a top secret mission. There can be no talking, on or off the job. The sinking of *HMS Hood* is an example of Enigma Cypher compromise. Fifteen hundred lost. Only three survivors.

You and your colleagues have been hand picked. Your record and the credentials you come with tell us we can trust you. If we’ve got that right, you will be one of the geese that gets to lay the golden egg but you must never cackle. Do we understand each other? Nothing you say or do must pass to anyone other than Number One.’

‘Who is Number One, Sir?’

‘Number One is Number One.’

None of it made any sense.

What did Enigma Cyphers have to do with geese laying golden eggs? And who the hell was Number One?

‘What exactly do I have to do, Sir?’ Joy asked trepidatiously.

'I'm coming to that.' Travis's eyes moved swiftly as those of a leopard stalking his prey.

'First I must have your assurance you will speak to no one.'

'Yes, Sir.'

'Righto, now we understand each other, you need to read and sign these papers. We will leave you to digest the content.'

'What am I getting myself into?' Joy asked herself.

Twenty minutes later the papers were in the hands of the Military and on their way back to the Foreign Office in London.

'One small thing, Miss White, before I take you through your duties.' The chief-of-staff turned to look out the window.

'At the end of each shift, you will report to Commander Denistone's office for a debriefing session. These sessions will help to clear your mind.'

He paused half-expecting a question but no question came and only in recent times did Joy break her silence, pulling back her hair to show the scars from the burns she received from the twirling heat ray that was used to erase memory of the day's activity. How cleverly she had learned to cover those scars with her makeup.

'You are assigned to Hut number 4. Morse code messages will be handed to you. You are to translate those messages from German into English. From time to time you will be asked to run errands. You can ride a bicycle?'

'Yes, Sir.'

'Good. Wear your gas mask at all times and remember the locals think you are a wealthy 'Odd Bod'.

From time to time, you will work alongside Job Cooper and Kit Fox. Job and Kit are Hinsley people. Job was an Oxford Don. Kit graduated from Cambridge. They thrive on the boring and laborious A=AS but will always make time for a chat, the occasional Charlie's Aunt and a good singsong around

the piano in the common room. Best learn the Bletchley anthem, Miss White.' ("The Bletchley anthem" was sung to the tune of Kilmer's "I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree".<sup>151</sup>)

If you can keep yourself from going crackers at all  
the things that you are told to do when Hitler sends  
along his air attackers with squibs and bombs and tries  
to frighten you.

If you can hear the hellish banshee warning without that  
sinking feeling in your breast; or you can sleep in dug-outs  
till the morning and never feel you ought to have more rest;  
If you can laugh at every blackout stumble or murmur when  
you cannot find a pub. If you can eat your rations and not  
grumble about the wicked price you pay for grub.

If you can keep depression down to zero and view it all as just  
a bit of fun then, Sir, you'll be a bloody hero and, what is more,  
you'll be the only one!

'That's all for now, we'll see you bright and early in the morning. Get a good night's rest. John will drop you off at your digs. Good night.' As he disappeared through the panel in the wall, it crossed Joy's mind that she had, indeed, landed herself in the nut house. Situate half way between Oxford and Cambridge, the Hell-hole Bomb Room and the one hundred and eighty trillion character Colossus worked a treat.

In her diary Joy described her first day at Bletchley Park:

On my first day, I was given the tour. Lecture rooms, teleprinter room, radio room, mess room and so on. Whilst on the tour, I stopped to admire the Jacobean-style oak chimney piece in the dining room and imagined what living in the house would be like outside of war times.

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<sup>151</sup> Born Alfred Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918), Kilmer was an American writer, journalist, critic, editor and prolific poet whose works celebrate beauty, nature, faith and spirituality. He is best remembered for the short poem "Trees". Kilmer was killed by a sniper's bullet at the Second Battle of the Marne in 1918.

It was a sort of miss-mash in some ways. Past owners had simply had no single aesthetic approach. All the special rooms, like the ballroom and billiard room, had been converted for the war, notwithstanding, the house was, strangely, a work of art.

Later in the day, some of the 'bright sparks' (boffins) invited me to the Beer hut. I'd never tasted beer. Initiation meant joining in on a game called Cardinal Puff Puff. Vera Lynn was singing "There'll be Blue Birds over the White Cliffs of Dover"<sup>152</sup> on the radio and a couple of lads on the other side of the room were mimicking *Tokyo Rose*...<sup>153</sup>

"If you let this racket distract you, girlie, you'll miss the runway. If you miss the runway, you'll drink it down."

I failed the initiation and woke with a pounding headache. The headache was so bad I never took the liquid amber again. A week later, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour.

After the attack on Pearl Harbour Joy was ordered to organise some tea dances to take minds off the bad news. They couldn't go anywhere without hearing a radio playing George M. Cohan's "Over there"<sup>154</sup> and there was a great sense of relief that the Americans had finally decided to come to England's aid but a great deal of anxiety was still being carried around. She met Ken of Lavender Lane at the Christmas tea dance and went on to break Ken's

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<sup>152</sup> One of the most popular songs of World War II. Composed by Walter Kent (1941) with lyrics by Nat Burton, the song was written to lift the spirits of the Allied troops at a time when Nazi troops had conquered much of Europe and were bombing Britain.

<sup>153</sup> A generic name given by Allied troops in the South Pacific during World War II to English-speaking female broadcasters of Japanese propaganda who taunted the troops in an effort to lower morale. One of the most famous personas was Iva Toguri. Native to Los Angeles, Toguri was stranded in Japan at the outbreak of the War. Evidence suggests, however, she was not a Japanese sympathiser. The story of Tokyo (Tokio) Rose is reflected in the book *Flags of Our Fathers* (1945) authored by James Bradley and Ron Powers. *Flags of Our Fathers* tells the story of the Battle of Iwo Jima. The book inspired a film by the same name directed, co-produced and scored by Clint Eastwood (2006).

<sup>154</sup> Written in April, 1917, "Over There" was used in World War I and World War II to persuade young Americans to join the fight against the Hun.

heart. Not intentionally. Ken fell in love with her but she was in love with a man she had only ever seen in a newspaper.

Inside my mother's diary, a letter carefully folded in four parts and pressed with a flower

Dearest Joy,

It is not my intention to telephone you any more – nor to seek to take you out again. I feel that by taking this course I shall be doing the right thing. I can assure you that deep down – in the heart – I love you very much. This love has come to me slowly but steadily and it has blossomed out in such a way that I know it will be everlasting.

Joy – whosoever you choose as your companion for life is bound to go through hell in later years should you not be very sure of your love for him. If – after most profound and earnest consideration – you are guided to make another man your partner for life, I shall be able to take it. I shall be consoled by knowing that your future happiness has been secured.

My love for always, Ken

Joy spent the remainder of the war years, save the last two months, behind closed doors working for Alan Turing, the genius who broke the Nazi codes. Tragically, Turing never received his dues for reeling in the fish and smashing the Secret Writer. Why? A homosexual incident and a suicide.

On September 9, 2009, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown issued a posthumous apology. A couple of months prior to the end of the war Colonel Dickinson arrived. His job was to tie up an avalanche of loose ends. The real work was over. On April 30 Hitler shot himself in the head, German troops surrendered to Field Marshal Montgomery and allied troops started coming home. On hearing the good news, Jake Bisset took a stroll to the post office.

A telegram arrived for Joy:

Miss White, I should be most grateful if you would call me urgently. We have a position for you at the Control Council. STOP

Yours sincerely,  
James C. Bisset  
Chairman.

War over, the White family took stock. A resilient lot, they had escaped the bombs but there was no escaping the crippling arthritis and the lemon peel poverty. Youth gone, old age was now on the doorstep.

## Chapter Seven

It's all in the Stars...

Popular potter of snooker balls, Horace Lindrum the Australian champion is coming back for another shot at the world title. He is due sometime next month.

New Year's Day, Joy was working to complete the program for the year and finalise the guest list for the inaugural Snooker Ball<sup>155</sup> when she received an unexpected visitor. He asked her out but she turned him down. Don't ask me why. She probably didn't want to seem too keen. It was two years before he asked her again but, at her request, he did sign an autograph.

Bisset picked up the vibe early in the piece. He knew instinctively that the Council's most valuable commodity had fallen head over heels in love with Australia's Horace Lindrum, the player who held the governing body to account. Their credibility on the line, they were forced to pass a motion issuing break certifications. A certificate for the first world record break at snooker of 141, a certificate for the first world record break at snooker of 144 and, a short time later, a certificate for the greatest number of snooker centuries recorded in championship play; Melbourne Town Hall against Peter Mans of South Africa. Two centuries to Mans. Ten centuries to Lindrum. (Lindrum's breaks were 100, 101, 102, 102, 103, 105, 112, 123, 135 and 141).

Bisset was cordial.

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<sup>155</sup> After the Ball, Mac presented Joy with her first cue. Later, he weighted it down with a billiard ball to stop her raising her elbow when she took a shot. Sadly, the cue was stolen from a club in Tooting.

‘Congratulations, Horace, old chap, a very fine effort. Sorry it has taken us so long. You will be pleased to know the arrangements for the world championship are now well underway.’

Four weeks later, lithographs promoting the championship were plastered all over the City of London. Horace and Joe insured themselves for three thousand pounds against non-appearance (a huge sum of money in those days). The tall and attractive, Joyce Gardiner, (seven times women’s billiards champion) signed a contract to compere the event for an ‘undisclosed’ amount and the governing body issued a press release announcing a groundbreaking technological advance. Technicians had devised a method of attaching microphones to the table lights so as to amplify the click of the balls.

Held at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London in 1946 the championship was a box-office success. Twenty-four sessions sold out within the first two hours. The final was set at one hundred and forty-five frames. The longest final in history. High tribute must be paid to the promoter. Bob Jelks organised and staged the championship with aplomb. Credit is often given to others but W. Jelks of Holloway was the man who put snooker on the map in London for the very first time.

Prior to the event the BBC ‘Big Broadcast’ with a wide national audience reported:

The season is to wind up in a big way as far as professional snooker is concerned. Joe Davis is to meet the Australian champion, Horace Lindrum, in the final of the world professional snooker championship in the Horticultural Hall, Westminster, beginning May 6.

The event will last for two weeks and West End ticket prices will be charged. Over this period we shall see the most spectacular staging of snooker that has ever taken place. We have to go back to the days when John Roberts and William Cook played for the billiard championship in the presence of that great sportsman, the Prince of Wales, later, King Edward VII, to find anything comparable with it.

Who will win? It's anybody's guess, but, if I am to proffer an opinion, I will have to put my money on Davis. I say this for one reason and one reason only. Davis is the more experienced of the two in competition play. However, I was wrong in picking Arthur Spencer for the amateur billiard title and Albert Brown for the amateur snooker title, so, I could be wrong again. Many think Horace Lindrum has an excellent chance and, indeed, none can deny that he is a wonderful player.

Insofar as the century race, Davis's record now stands at 196 and Lindrum's at 182. Not much in it and, remember, Davis got an earlier start. He was born in 1901 and Lindrum in 1912.

Davis, I imagine, will have the advantage as far as the mental and the physical strain is concerned. (Davis has the nervous system of a fighter pilot). Lindrum has shown no weakness in this direction, but this will be no free-and-easy exhibition match. In this regard Davis is the veteran with the veteran's advantage. Notwithstanding, both are great sportsmen and very popular and each will be as ready to congratulate his victor as any man among the spectators. It is an Empire Championship in one sense and if Horace Lindrum happens to win, his victory will be as sincerely popular here in the Empire as it will be in his native land.

A few weeks after the event the 'Big Broadcast' reported the results. Horace lost but the 'Big Broadcast' noted his skill at the game and graciousness in defeat:

Last season ended with a spectacular flourish in the Horticultural Hall, Westminster, when Joe Davis successfully defended his title of world professional snooker champion against Horace Lindrum of Australia.

The match was wonderfully staged-managed by W. Jelks and, by an ingenious system of microphone adjustment, the referee's voice, though he spoke in a quiet conversational tone, could easily be heard by every spectator.

As most “knowing ones” expected, Davis (with his uncanny skill of getting on to the second object ball) emerged the victor though I must say Lindrum (with his incredible long pots) put up a bloody good show and nearly took him out. I saw several of the sessions, all of them thrilling. During the match, both players made multiple centuries, but, hard as he tried, Davis couldn’t match Lindrum’s 141 nor, might I tell you, do I think he could match Lindrum’s generosity of spirit for I don’t think I have seen a more elegant runner-up.

Quick around the table, his great sense of theatre, humour and Peter Panish grin, turned the green-shaded, hushed and Cathedral-like atmosphere and the occasionally monotonous, ‘click, click, click’ of the balls into a sparkling environ of polished execution. But Horace never managed to take the title from Davis. Notwithstanding, he was Joe’s greatest adversary. Testament to this fact is the prized gift still in our family’s possession. Joe Davis’s billiard table ring. The ring is solid gold with a billiard table delicately etched in gold on the front. Davis’s signature appears on the inside. Davis recognised that, even though Horace succumbed to his superior tactics and greater confidence, not a final was won without one hell of a bloody fight.

In recent times I became curious and asked the Black Poker a lot of questions about the championship. I was particularly interested to learn about the referee. She told me she could write at length about Tommy Leng. There was so much personality in cuemanship, so much scope for individuality. Leng was testament to this fact. He knew life was short and you can only ever devote a certain amount of it to your billiards so he didn’t let complexities get in his way.

‘What kinds of things would you write about Tommy Leng?’ I asked.

‘I’d write about the night he performed blindfolded at a London Club shortly after the war. That was really something. Tommy knew how to entertain an audience. Of course, I could also write at length about how things have changed....’ There was a sadness in her voice.

## Chapter Eight

The Eyes have it...

Radio on the boil, Joy was belting out "The Trolley Song".<sup>156</sup>

'Well, aren't we a happy little vegemite.' Tommy Bradlaugh Leng called up the stairwell.

'Good morning to you, Tommy. Come on up.'

Joy leaned over the balustrade and looked down at him.

'How is my favourite referee this morning?'

'Ready to take you to St. Ermin's.'

'Fantastic. Two ticks, Tommy, I've just got to sign off on the artwork for the Women's Handbook.'

Tommy frequently popped in to take Joy for a morning cuppa or an early lunch at St. Ermin's.

A fine establishment, St. Ermin's enjoyed a superlative reputation for serving pasture-fed English meat and Tommy had a penchant for a juicy rump. Reaching the landing, he stopped to draw breath. A big man, he wasn't one for stairs. Tommy made himself comfortable and surveyed the room. 'That's some hat, my dear.' He was pointing at a hand-made straw.

'Very Scarlett O'Hara.'<sup>157</sup>

'A present.'

'A present!'

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<sup>156</sup> "The Trolley Song" was composed by Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane and made famous by Judy Garland in the motion picture *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944).

<sup>157</sup> Central character in Margaret Mitchell's epic historical romance *Gone with the Wind* (1939) which inspired a motion picture of the same name directed by Victor Fleming, George Cukor and Sam Wood and starring Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable. At the 12th Academy Award ceremony in 1940 the motion picture received ten Academy Awards, including an outstanding award for the use of colour for the enhancement of dramatic mood.

'The boy has got taste.' Tommy grinned. 'Received an invitation to Ascot have we? The Queen's box, perhaps?'

'No, Tommy.'

'But I do have this.'

She flashed the solitaire on the third finger of her left hand.

'Now, that's a rock. Garrard<sup>158</sup> no less!'

It was a clear-cut diamond.

'Lucky girl! This is a turn-up for the books. If my memory serves me correctly, a week or so ago you told him to go to buggery. This isn't someone new is it?

Someone I don't know about?'

'Of course not,' Joy retorted.

'Well, you can't blame me for asking the question. You were pretty angry with Horace.'

'I was cross with him for going on to the reception after his last exhibition without me.'

'Cross! That's an understatement. You were fuming.'

'I was being fragile. Guess I've got to get used to sharing him with the world.'

'I'm afraid you do, my dear. You do. The sooner you come to grips with that reality the better. Anyway, the good news is, he has finally popped the question.

I must say it's about bloody time.

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<sup>158</sup> Entering his mark in the Goldsmith's Hall in 1722, George Wickes (1698-1761) established R. & S. Garrard & Co. in 1735, Haymarket now headquartered at Albemarle Street in Mayfair, the company has a long, rich and interesting history. In 1843 Queen Victoria appointed Garrard 'Crown Jewellers'. This privilege was revoked on July 15, 2007 but the company still designs and manufactures under warrant of the Prince of Wales. In 2006, the company was acquired by US private equity firm, Yacaipa companies. Prior owners include, Prince Jefri Bolkiah, a younger brother of the Sultan of Brunei, and private investors, Lawrence Stroll and Silas Chou. During its long history, Garrard & Co. has gained a stellar reputation for distinguished craftsmanship, dealing with a number of famous jewels, including the Cullinan diamonds (including, Cullinan 1, "The Great Star of Africa"), recutting the famous Koh-i-Noor into a brilliant and crafting the Imperial Crown of India (1911), Queen Mary's crown for her coronation (1911) and the crown for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth (wife of King George VI – Queen Elizabeth's mother). The Garrard Engineering and Manufacturing Company was established in 1915. Famous for producing high-quality gramophone turntables, the company was sold to British-based electronics, defence and telecommunications company, Plessey, in 1960.

‘Tommy, I’m so happy. Mrs. Horace Lindrum. It has a nice ring to it.

We are going to tie the knot at the Registry Office in a couple of weeks.’

Tommy swung on his heel. ‘Oh, no, you’re not. If he wants to marry you, Ding Dong (Tommy called the Black Poker – Ding Dong – because of her beautiful singing voice) he’s going to do it proper like. You’re having a wedding with all the trimmings, my little love.’ He looked away. ‘I wonder if I can talk Paul Bocuse<sup>159</sup> into crafting a billiard table cake?’

‘Tommy, my Mum and Dad don’t have that sort of money.’

‘Not another word from you on this. I am picking up the tab. All Mummy and Daddy have to do is come along and enjoy themselves.’

‘Have you told the boys in Fleet Street?’

‘No, not yet, Tommy.’

‘My dear, the story is front page news. You better get some rest.

You want to look your best when the press turn up on your doorstep.’

‘Oh, my life!’ Joy thought to herself.

‘Go get your hair done, have a facial, buy a new dress.’

Tommy pushed a hundred pounds into her hand.

How quickly life changes.

One minute, sitting behind a desk at Bletchley Park worrying the bouncing bomb might skid into your hut. The next, meeting the man in the newspaper who you never really believed you would ever get to meet.

‘Joy, I’m giving a party tonight. Please come along. I’ll send a car to pick you up around 7-00.’

Horace wasn’t going to take no for an answer. Not this time.

‘Mum! Mum!’

‘Up here, Titch.’

‘Mum, I’ve been asked to a party and you’re never going to guess...’

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<sup>159</sup> Paul Bocuse (1926-) is an internationally acclaimed French chef, renowned for the high quality of his restaurants and his innovative cuisine.

‘Slow down, slow down.’

Joy burst into the box room.

‘I am going to a party in the Mayfair Suite at Claridges.

Mum, did you hear what I just said?’

‘I heard you.’

‘What on earth am I going to wear and what am I going to do with my hair?’

Rozemai thought for a minute.

‘I’ll get the curling tongs. You get out your silk dress. I have something that might look very nice with your silk dress. I’ll be back in a minute.’

Rozemai’s jewellery box had pride of place. A gift from her mother on the occasion of her eighteenth birthday, it sat in the centre of her dressing table next to her ivory brush and comb set. Carved in sandalwood, the gift never lost its fragrance.

There was no time now to take the letters out, instead she lifted the bundle to her lips, kissed them lightly and put them back. Frederick was a letter writer. His mother had taught him well.

Rozemai sighed deeply then made her way back to her daughter’s bedroom.

‘What do you think?’ she asked uncurling the fingers of her right hand.

‘Oh, Mum, they’re beautiful.’

Frederick’s parting gift.

A pair of cameo earrings worn every day till the scroll arrived.

7.00pm, a Silver Wraith<sup>160</sup> pulled into the kerb.

Rozemai’s gasp brought Arthur and Joy to the window. The two women looked at each other, raised their eye-brows, giggled and fell into a hug.

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<sup>160</sup> The Silver Wraith was the first post-war Rolls-Royce model. It was manufactured at the Crewe factory from 1947-1959.

'You'll need this.' Rozemai walked to the coat stand and removed the stole they had affectionately nicknamed, 'The Bear'.

'Thanks, Mummy. Don't wait up for me. I love you.'

Her father took the stole and wrapped it round his daughter's shoulders.

Joy hugged her father and wished her parents, Goodnight.

'Go to sleep,' Arthur kept telling his wife. She'd been tossing and turning for near on two hours.

'I'm going to make a cuppa.'

'It's cold, love. Try counting sheep.'

'I'm going to make myself a cuppa,' she repeated firmly, climbing into her dressing gown.

She was sitting by the fire in the parlour when her daughter put the key in the lock.

'Mum, what are you doing still up?'

'I was so excited for you, I couldn't sleep. Come on, tell me all about it.'

'Golly, gosh, Mum, you should see how the other half live! Our whole house would fit in the hallway of the Mayfair Suite. '

Many late night chats ensued as Rozemai and Arthur came to accept their daughter had lost her heart to a young Australian. The following entry in Joy's diary is one of many relating to their courtship.

Joy's diary – The Courting Days

'The Cadbury's chocolate factory'<sup>161</sup>

'Miss White, whilst Mr. Lindrum is giving his exhibition, would you care to inspect our factory?' What an interesting day! I got to sample quite a few chocs on the way through. On the way home Horace asked me to tell him about the factory and he asked me whether I had saved him any chocolate. I felt dreadful because I didn't even think to do that. He saw the look on my face, pulled the car into the kerb and said, 'Quick, get out. I have something to show you.' He pulled the boot.

"I thought your Mum might like a few boxes".

A few boxes!

LONDON

Tuesday, July 5, 1949, Horace did not wire his mother.

He thought about sending a telegram and decided against it. I guess he knew the idea would not appeal to her. She'd been telling him for years there was no place for a wife and family. Family is too much weight for a champion.

Rozemai wasn't happy either. She turned up at St. Martin-in-the-Fields<sup>162</sup> with a sour look on her face. She had a sneaking suspicion she would lose her

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<sup>161</sup> Situated 6.4km south of Birmingham, the Cadbury Bournville factory was established by Quaker brothers, George and Richard Cadbury. Testament to the brothers' quite extraordinary long-term vision, especially that of George Cadbury who saw the importance of purchasing a large land parcel of 120 acres for future expansion, is the fact that Cadbury remains one of Birmingham's main employers. The Bournville location was selected because of its close proximity to the canal network and planned railway expansion which would aid the delivery of milk products and cocoa. The Cadbury brother's interest in the manufacture of chocolate flowed from their long-term involvement in the Temperance movement and, in particular, the belief that nurturing a taste for tea, coffee, cocoa and chocolate would deter people from drinking alcohol.

<sup>162</sup> An Anglican church situate on the north-east corner of Trafalgar Square in the City of Westminster. The present building was constructed in a Neoclassical design by James Gibbs in 1722-1724.

daughter to Australia and that idea did not appeal to her one little bit. The bride was late. Very late.

Whispering Ted Lowe did his utmost to put Horace at ease.

‘She’s not coming, Ted.’

‘She’ll come. There’s obviously some sort of problem. I’ll go and speak with the Verger and find out if he’s got a teapot of brandy in his cupboard to calm your nerves.’

A jovial fellow, the Verger had a face like a vintage Anglo Swiss admiral, its hands stuck on five past ten.

‘Don’t be concerned, Mr. Lowe, this happens from time to time. It’s Princess Margaret.’

‘Princess Margaret?’

‘Yes. Princess Margaret often brings London to a stand-still. She loves to go shopping.’ His cackle was infectious.

Joy wanted to get out of the car and walk. She opened the door of the Silver Dawn<sup>163</sup> and went as far as to place a foot on the roadway but Arthur leaned across and ever so gently pulled her back into the vehicle.

‘Dad, he won’t wait.’

‘He’ll wait,’ Arthur responded calmly.

2.00, 2.30, 3.00...No bride. It was 3.30 before the Verger summoned groom and best man to the Altar. ‘She’s arrived,’ he whispered tucking the flask of brandy under his cassock. ‘It will take her a little time to make her way to the front door. There’s quite a crowd outside and a veritable gaggle of photographers.’

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<sup>163</sup> Produced at the Rolls-Royce factory at Crewe between 1949 and 1955, the Silver Dawn was the first Rolls-Royce to offer a factory-built body.

Around 4.00pm, Joy started down the aisle to Handel's  
"The Water Music".<sup>164</sup> Her journey into the Lindrum family had begun.

London

*News of the World*

'Billiards Star visits Jolly Cricketers'

Within a few days of his marriage, billiards star, Horace Lindrum and his beautiful bride were luncheon guests of Mr. Percy Calcutt proprietor of 'The Jolly Cricketers' in Evendon. The meeting was a private one. Mr. Calcutt who has long been keenly interested in the Bishop of Chelmsford's fund for restoration of bombed Essex churches and post-war needs soon found a kindred spirit in Lindrum.

A little birdie tells us that, later in the year, Lindrum will give a series of billiards exhibitions and partake of a little cricket on the Village Green to raise funds. The same little birdie told us, Lindrum is not just a genius at the table, he can bowl like Larwood<sup>165</sup> and bat like Polly Umrigar.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Composed by George Frideric Handel, "The Water Music" is a collection of orchestral movements often published as three Suites. The work premiered on July 17, 1717.

<sup>165</sup> Harold Larwood (1904-1995) professional cricketer for Nottinghamshire and England between 1924 and 1938. A right-arm fast bowler, combining unusual speed with great accuracy, he was the main exponent of the bowling style known as "Bodyline" and found himself at the epicentre of a furore during a tour of Australia by the Marylebone Cricket Club in 1932-33 which brought Anglo-Australian diplomatic relations to the brink of collapse. According to Harold Larwood's biographer Duncan Hamilton: 'Larwood was one of the most talented, accurate and intimidating fast bowlers of all time. But he is mainly remembered for his role in the 1932-33 Ashes series, in which the England captain Douglas Jardine ordered him to bowl according to 'fast leg theory' to suppress the batting of Don Bradman. Larwood was made a scapegoat – and he never played cricket for England again. Devastated by this betrayal, he eventually emigrated to Australia, where he was accepted by the country that had once despised him.' *Harold Larwood* (London: Quercus, 2009).

<sup>166</sup> Pahlam Ratanji "Polly" Umrigar (1926-2006) played first-class cricket for Bombay (Mumbai) and test cricket for the Indian team mainly as a middle-order batsman but also bowling occasional medium pace and off spin.

In contemporary terms, Horace – with his movie star looks – was as young and passionate and as driven, and, indeed, as captivating as Indian cricketer Virat Kohli.<sup>167</sup> After the visit to The Jolly Cricketers, the newly weds made their way to Jersey<sup>168</sup> for a brief honeymoon. It was during their stay on Jersey that Horace first expressed concern about his eyesight. He had every reason to be concerned. He made his living from his craft and he now had a wife to feed. Joy called 147 Harley Street.<sup>169</sup>

A week later Horace was declared technically blind. When the British tabloids got wind of it, they got on the phone.

‘How on earth do you play billiards and snooker?’

Horace told them, he played by ear. The lenses of his glasses suggest he was telling the truth. The Black Poker believed the eyesight deterioration was the result of non-stop match-play. That’s one possibility. The other is the tragic result of Clara’s blood test. Syphilis was the scourge of the world in 1912 and untreated congenital syphilis always had the potential to cause blindness in a mother’s infant.

Immediately after the consultation the specialist briefed Karneham Brothers Manufacturing of London to design a super-light, well-constructed frame ensuring clear and unimpaired vision by way of a swivel lens.

——— I was born on Friday April 14, 1950. According to Chinese astrology, I am a metal Tiger. Metal tigers thrive on a good challenge, pounce when necessary

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<sup>167</sup> Virat Kohli (1988-), a right-handed middle order batsman who captained the Indian team to victory at the 2008 u/19 Cricket World Cup in Malaysia.

<sup>168</sup> Jersey is the largest of the Channel Islands. Officially the Bailiwick of Jersey (Bailliage de Jersey), it is situated off the coast of Normandy, France.

<sup>169</sup> One of the most prestigious and respected private hospitals in London.

and do whatever it takes to defend their honour. This story is all about defending my family honour.

It was a long labour. I'm afraid I gave my mother rather a bad time. In my late teens/early twenties, I gave everybody around me a bad time. Not long after my entree into the world I was introduced to the billiard table and to Hillcrest. Hillcrest was the first real home I ever remember and the only home I've ever felt I really had. Situate at 36 Streatham Common, the white rendered, two storied home was bordered by poplars and a manicured hedge. If we were to travel back in time, we'd see the iron gates, the circular driveway and the apple trees. Today, the house is a memory. The land has surrendered to what we call progress.

*Selling Hillcrest was the worst financial decision my parents ever made.* It was on this acreage that life began for me in earnest and where I got to see a side of my father that only those who live at the coal-face get to see. The Keystone Kop<sup>170</sup> version of the champion.

'Joy, Joy!' Horace was painting the bathroom.

Joy rolled back the linoleum she had just laid in the toilet and raced down the corridor.

'Oh, my God!'

Pink, pink and more pink! Horace had closed the ladder with the open tin sitting on the top.

After the disaster with the pink paint, he cut through the electrical wire of the Black & Decker whilst attempting to trim the hedge. Next, he pinned a Catherine Wheel to the billiard room door and burnt off the brand new paint. Whatever Horace was, he was not a handyman! He was, however, a perfectionist. On the lead up to the 1951/52 world championship he was practicing eight to ten hours a day, appearing in person only at teatime.

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<sup>170</sup> Fictional incompetent policemen who featured in silent films from 1912-1917. Films featuring the Keystone Kops were produced by Mack Sennett for his Keystone Film Company.

On August 28, 1951, Alex Brown, the acting chairman of the Professional Players' Association called Horace to inform him that association chairman, Joe Davis, had called an extraordinary general meeting of the association at the Albany Club at 2.30pm the following day.

The British players were getting greedy. They were putting their love of cash before their love of their sport and they had made a decision to boycott the world title in an attempt to pressure the governing body into bowing to their demands for a bigger share of the pie. Journalist Geoffrey Simpson leaked the story of the rift between the players and the governing body in his column in the *Daily Mail*.

Simpson concluded:

The main reason for the break is not to improve playing fees but to undermine the authority of the game's controllers.

Horace and Clark McConachy attended the meeting. Sipping brandy and puffing smoke, the British professionals were hunkered down around a boardroom table. They were trying to work out how to persuade Horace and McConachy to withdraw their entries to the championship. Joe cut to the chase with words and phrases they had never heard him use before but they stood firm. They would not be bought. Not under any circumstances. Rather, they adopted the view that a boycott could potentially damage reputations, threaten long-held traditions, embroil the governing body in controversy and compromise the ethics and integrity of the cue sports. Horace pointed out that they had always played for the honour and prestige of participation and, to that end, they had been well remunerated. Even during the War years they had been able to put bread on the table. He felt holding the governing body to ransom was the wrong thing to do and both he and McConachy advised Joe Davis that they would not be withdrawing their entries.



A whiff of a controversy and journalists turn into a whirling mass of bees swarming around a honey pot. They called my mother to find out what position Horace was going to take. When that didn't work they set up camp on the front lawn waiting for Horace's return from the meeting. Horace told them:

'I regard myself as a visitor to England and, as such, enter the championship and accept the conditions of the host country. It is my belief that the control of the sport should be independent of the profession and, because that is my belief, I propose to uphold tradition and play by the rules set down by the governing body.'

The Fleet Street press reported:

Full marks, Horace. You will go down in history for taking the ethical pathway and making the right decision. The billiards and snooker loving public will not forget you.

Then on Tuesday February 19, the *Daily Express* published the following article under the header 'Snooker Pros Boycott Title':

The split in the professional billiards and snooker world is widening. Yesterday the Professional Billiards Players' Association confirmed its decision to boycott the World Snooker Championship staged by the British Association and Control Council. The Bully Boys of Sport are going to run their own world championship for the next three years and "to avoid confusion" have decided to name it "the world match-play snooker championship"...

Journalist, Harold May, believed the boycott was over money. I don't know whether it was or it wasn't. I can only speculate. It is also possible, having lost the billiard crown to New Zealand that year, the Brits were not too keen on losing the snooker crown to Australia and there was a real risk of that happening. You see the Peter Pan of Snooker was at his peak. There can be no question as to that reality.

Six months later, the *News of the World*, Sunday August 12, 1951 announced all was set for the world professional snooker championship between world professional billiards champion, Clark McConachy of New Zealand, and Horace Lindrum of Australia. The English players were still persisting with their boycott of the event and 'the fairytale scene from earlier championships had been put to bed.'

Horace and Clark (Mac) played a marathon one hundred and forty-five frames of snooker on a championship table with Kentfield pockets to capacity audiences at the Houldsworth Hall in Manchester over a two week period. During the event the press hailed them as two of the greatest sporting heroes of all time for upholding the 'Fair Play' principle. Horace emerged the victor, winning 94 frames to 49, but the Pheidippides of Snooker conceded the battle against McConachy was the toughest of his career. As Horace wrote in his book *Snooker, Billiards & Pool* published posthumously in 1974:

'Clark is a very strong deliberate player and a master exponent of the screw shot. I can say with all honesty I didn't feel happy until I had secured the winning lead.'<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Horace Lindrum, *Snooker, Billiards & Pool*, Sydney: Paul Hamlyn, first edition, 1974, 85.

There was great excitement the day Horace drove up the Streatham Hill with the world championship trophy strapped to the top of his car. Sadly, I don't remember that excitement nor do I remember being photographed with the trophy but there is no denying the evidence of the win.

Immediately after the final Horace received a number of oral challenges. News of this brought about a sharp response from Harold May.

Talking Sport  
*Sunday Empire News*  
March 9, 1952.

'They've snookered themselves'  
Harold May

As with everything else, so in sport: just as soon as there's something you haven't got, and you can't have, you want it. At least, that's the way it looks to be with the billiards professionals.

When they couldn't have their cake and eat it where the world professional snooker championship was concerned, members of the Professional Billiards Players Association decided they weren't interested in the event at all. They even decided to run their own "championship". For once, praise be, the Billiards Association and Control Council went on with their plans for the one and only official event, and so, for the first time, the 40-year-old Australian, Horace Lindrum, is champion of the world.

But, no sooner does he win it, than the fellows who've contested the previous five finals – Fred Davis and Walter Donaldson – trot out Five hundred pound challenges to him to play one of them anywhere, anytime.

That does just two things.

It proves that the title they tried to “kid didn’t mean a thing” unless it could be won on the professionals’ own financial terms is worth something after all – in fact, they snookered themselves – and it makes it abundantly clear that if the British Association and Control Council pursue their present strong line they will win the breakaway battle with the professionals as sure as night follows day.....

Horace didn’t receive any official challenges (official challenges needed to be in writing), but he told Harold May, he was prepared to meet any challenges that came provided the challengers were prepared to play by the rules of the sport. No formal challenges were received and he retired as undefeated world professional snooker champion six years later.

Now, before you go listening to those responsible for Raftery’s Rules who argue the Professional Players’ Association needed to take the reins for the sake of the sport let me give you one or two pieces of information from the Control Council’s annual report.

First point to make is the Control Council was manned by a team of well-respected and highly successful businessmen who were absolutely committed the growth and development of the cue sports and, through their efforts, the sport of snooker had enjoyed unparalleled popularity from 1936 to the outbreak of World War II. During the War years the Council managed to hold the playing leagues together, loaned tables to the Armed Services across the world and raised thousands of dollars for the war effort. But sporting events pre, during and post war served to progressively change the complexion of snooker and, indeed, the complexion of sport.

These included, the scratching of Phar Lap in the Caulfield Cup (1930); the poisoning of Phar Lap (1932); the Bodyline controversy (1932-33); the fast leg theory of bowling a cricket ball at the batsman’s body so as to cause harm;

the mysterious and yet to be explained disappearance of the entries of Horace Lindrum and Frederick III in the world professional billiards championship (1932/33); the nursery cannon controversy (1933); the bombing of Thurston's Hall (1940) which saw the destruction of valuable billiards antiques.

After the War, the Control Council set out to rebuild the profession but the Gaylord Ravenals (the gambling boys) weren't interested in a professional rebuilding program. All the Gaylord Ravenals were interested in was moneymaking. That meant finding ways and means to harness the sport and muzzle the players. This set of men did more than 'infest the various places of public resort, and live upon the spoils of the unwary'<sup>172</sup>, they surgically removed the soul – *the eros and ethos* – of the sports of billiards and snooker.

Gentlemen,

I have found a man whose business is "publicity".  
I think the term is "publicity expert".

He is, at present, doing the publicity for the National Sporting Club, the Wembley Stadium, the Auto Cycle Union (speedway) etc. and is in touch with all those essential to know – if you get my drift.

I have in mind exploitation, real gossip, live news stories.  
Anything and everything to make the life of the sporting journalist more comfortable.

Poised for a takeover, the gambling boys sank their teeth into the governing body's jugular but the governing body did not fold overnight, the decline was progressive. You could say the body was white anted –corrupted – from within. Bisset was given the golden handshake. The Black Poker was offered a position at Western Pools at twice the salary. She had no option but to take it as her family had been financially decimated by war. However, she may have thought twice had she known her removal from the association was part

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<sup>172</sup> E. White, *A Treatise on the Game of Billiards*, (London: W. Bulmer & Co., 1807), 2.

of an almighty plan to change the complexion of the sport. She may, in fact, have realised this was the case 'after the event' because she left Western Pools to take on the management of Horace's career.

Whatever the case, after Bisset and Joy's departure the Gaylord Ravenals set up a private company to run the sport, bought their way into the trade and worked towards straightjacketing the profession so that only those who would play the game by their rules would be permitted entry to the golden circle. The final break came in the seventies. It coincided with the death of the last member of the billiard playing Lindrums.

After the boycott, the Gaylords tried to axe Horace's career by feeding it to a global press that Horace had retired. Colin Duncan, barrister-at-law – on instructions from Messrs. Good, Good, & Good of 1 Southampton Place, High Holborn, London, WC1 – stated:

It is not defamatory to say of a man that he is retiring from his occupation although in the case of a man who gains his livelihood from being known to follow a particular profession or occupation, such a statement is obviously calculated, if untrue, to cause him serious damage.

Horace decided not to take action. He knew a skillful leader subdues the enemy without fighting. He also knew he would pay a price for defending the governing body. But that didn't seem to worry him. He was determined to do the right thing no matter the personal cost.

To escape the politics of sport and avoid being caught up in match-fixing, Horace chose to become an exhibition player and, in the second half of his fifty year career, the Press across the world waxed lyrical at his achievements. He recorded a phenomenal number of snooker centuries; more snooker centuries, in fact, than he had recorded in the first half of his career when his eyesight was more acute. As you might expect, Horace received many requests to speak and

he took up the opportunity to push his views on the changing complexion of sport which he believed was changing too radically for its own good. As he said at the London Press Club on his retirement from competitive play in 1957:

‘Looking back, I can only have the warmest regard for the profession which made my exciting travels possible.

That same profession is scorned by some as a sign of a misspent youth. This raises the shackles on the back of my neck. For me, for my family, the billiard room was and is our temple. It symbolises respect, discipline, damned hard work and extraordinary and, sometimes, surprising strokes. A favourite diversion for men and women like Omar Khayyam, Mozart, Mary Queen of Scots, Napoleon, Rudyard Kipling, Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, King Edward VII, King George V, Marconi, Mark Twain and many others, it has presented as a sanctuary for convalescence for disabled ex-servicemen and women and as an aid to encourage young people to “think”.

Still, the filmic image of seedy and unsavoury pool rooms threatens to turn the once sacrosanct billiard room into a haunt for juvenile delinquents, gamblers, cheats, drug pushers and other hardened criminals and the once dignified sport of ladies and gentlemen into the spiritless recreation of gypsies and thieves.

No tie. Cigarette dangling from the mouth. Beer in the hand.  
Uncivilised, undignified language. No knowledge of the rule of  
“Fair Play”. No respect for craftsmanship. The click, click within  
ear-shot of the Ker-chink of the bandit.

Billiards and Snooker are games of science and skill and because they are  
games of science and skill, I ask you to please do what you can to  
preserve the remnants of what has truly been a glorious age.’

Horace became a hero of ethical sportsmanship. Speaking openly of his  
concerns may have earned him enemies. He believed that the sports of billiards  
and snooker would die if transported into the clubs and pubs because that  
would make them inaccessible to women and children and greed – the need for  
space to house more poker machines – would see the status of billiard rooms  
reduced.

He appreciated the role pubs and clubs had played over time in building  
a sense of community, but the installation of coin-operated tables and poker  
machines would, in his view, bring about a radical change in the complexion of  
pubs and clubs themselves. Coin-operated pool tables conjured the image of  
American gangsters during the Depression era who were frequently depicted  
huddled around pool tables and – poker machines, by their very nature, were  
anti-social and contradicted a sense of community and social contact found in  
pubs and clubs prior to their introduction. The larger impact, of course, would  
be the impact on community, family and culture by popularising and somehow  
making gambling a normal part of societal practise. This engraving on the

psyche or implanting in the brain has insidiously created a mass of blight on families and communities across Australia and elsewhere.

Horace did not refer to a 'set of men infesting the places of public resort', rather to 'gambling men and big business interests'. He knew, from his own experience, that when powerful forces and big business interests came onto the playing field, the playing field became a controlled pitch and participants and consumers became tools for moneymaking ends.

It is interesting indeed that his retirement from competition play coincided with the premier on Broadway of American composer Meredith Willson's most famous work *The Music Man* (1957)<sup>173</sup> which features the song "Ya Got Trouble". The lyrics of this song critique gambling, alcohol, tobacco and other anti-social behaviours and foreshadow the concerns Horace was expressing in relation to the corruption of the sports he so loved.

*Well, either you're closing your eyes to a situation you do now  
wish to acknowledge or you are not aware of the caliber of  
disaster indicated by the presence of a pool table in your community...*

*I consider that the hours I spend with a cue in my hand are golden, help you  
cultivate horse sense and a cool head and keen eye...It takes judgment, brains  
and maturity to score in a baulk-line game.*

*I say any boob kin take and shove a ball in a pocket and they call that sloth. The  
first big step on the road to the depths of Deg-ra-day...*

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<sup>173</sup> It took composer and lyricist Meredith Willson eight years and thirty revisions to perfect *The Music Man*. Two of his musical scores were nominated for Academy Awards. Another of his works *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* was also a success on Broadway. Both musicals were made into motion pictures.

*First medicinal wine from a teaspoon then beer from a bottle  
An' the next thing you know your son is...[gambling]...*

On reflection, I think Horace felt 'A transmutation of the whole social order was necessary.'<sup>174</sup> That may or may not now be possible but, at the very least, we should do what we can to slow the decay.

One of the tragedies – aside from the fact that billiards and snooker are not Olympic sports – is the fact that the governing body founded by John Roberts Senior and Field Marshal Horatio Herbert Kitchener,<sup>175</sup> and the rich history that flowed from the establishment of that enterprise, has been totally disregarded by the new guard. Then again, laying that special piece of history to rest with the dignity it so richly deserves is probably far better than seeing it placed in the wrong hands.

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<sup>174</sup> Joseph Campbell, *A Hero of a Thousand Faces*,

<sup>175</sup> Field Marshall Horatio Herbert Kitchener KG, KP, OM, GCSI, GCMG, GCIE, ADC, PC (1850-1916). Senior British Army Officer and colonial administrator who won fame in 1898 for winning the Battle of Omdurman and securing control of the Sudan after which he was given the title 'Lord Kitchener of Khartoum'. As Chief-of-Staff (1900-02) in the Second Boer War he played a key role in Lord Roberts' conquest of the Boer Republics then succeeded Roberts as Commander-in-Chief. He went on to play a central role in the early part of World War I.

## Chapter Nine

### Two sides of the same Penny

Mr. Round managed a 'Good Morning'.

Clara responded with the smile of a saint.

Engaged to provide legal advice relating to the operations of Lindrum's in Pitt Street, Round was not looking forward to what he knew would be a tough meeting. He talked generalities until the refreshments arrived then he put his guard up. He began by telling Clara it had taken him some time to scour the journals and ledgers in order to understand how the business worked and to determine the current position. He had also considered the lease. He went on to give her the news she didn't want to hear. There was more money going out the door than there was coming in and Clara would need to revisit the business model and secure an injection of capital if she wanted to continue. She would also need to solve the 'noise' problem if she wanted to keep her patrons happy. Rights existed under the lease. She could complain to the landlord about the noisy tenants he had installed on the floor above the billiard room. If their noise did not cease, she could institute proceedings against him seeking damages for loss of quiet enjoyment. But Round was forced to point out the proceedings would be timely and expensive.

Clara told him what he could do with his advice. There was nothing wrong with her business model. There was something wrong with the drunken hoons upstairs. 'Their 'hoo-hooing and ker-chink' is destroying my business,' she told him. 'The greedy landlord is a party to the plan. The new tenants have offered him more rent to take over my space and they are trying to get me out by ruining my business.' Mr. Parker appeared in the doorway. He had come to say hello. Clara didn't give him an opportunity to open his mouth.

‘Parker, you and I have known each other for how long? You damn well know there is no way I am going to give up my business. Why the hell didn’t you pick up the phone and save me the journey in here today? You’re being paid to solve problems. Those ruddy Gaylords (gambling men) above the billiard room are engaged in a willful act of destruction.’

Then she turned on Round.

‘Mr. Round, life is like a game of football. You can get injured in the scrum and, at the end of a game, there can only be one winner. But the winner is the person with the principles not the person who breaks the rules. Have you read *War of the Worlds*?’<sup>176</sup>

Round nodded.

‘Well you obviously didn’t understand what Mr. Wells was saying. He was issuing a warning to mankind. The martian invasion was a symbol for World War III. A war between man and the machine. When you pull the handle on a poker machine you surrender body and mind to a *Clubman*.<sup>177</sup> When you play billiards and snooker, you use body and mind.’

Clara was vehemently opposed to any activity which she perceived served to destroy the intellect. Rallies, demonstrations, Band of Hope marches, she had participated in them all and, as a member of the Temperance movement, she had fought long and hard to convince the collective consciousness to debunk the six o’clock swills. ‘Dream of the possibilities don’t drink and gamble your life away.’ That was the underlying philosophy. She now felt defeated. Yet, something inside of her, refused to surrender.

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<sup>176</sup> *War of the Worlds* is a science fiction novel which first appeared in serialised form in 1897 in *Pearson’s* magazine in the United Kingdom and *Cosmopolitan* magazine in the United States. The text was published by William Heinemann, London, in 1898. A Halloween performance of the text on October 30, 1938 at the Mercury Theatre (an independent repertory theatre in New York established by Orson Welles and John Houseman in 1937), broadcast by Columbia Broadcasting System radio network, caused mass panic. Actor and director of the production Orson Welles convinced listeners that the Martian invasion was a ‘reality’.

<sup>177</sup> A one-armed bandit rolled out in 1953.

Parker was sympathetic. He was at a loss to understand why the authorities had allowed the spread of the gambling disease. The only answer he could find was taxes. The state was fueling itself on the sport of cigarettes, alcohol, spinning reels and clustering illusions. This reality caused him to fall into a great period of reflection on industries that preyed on the most vulnerable in society. How easy it was for the uneducated to be sucked into the Monte Carlo fallacy. He could see the virus spreading. New and more innovative strategies would come into play.

A few weeks after her visit to Round, Clara left the business in the hands of a manager and took passage to London on the *Dominion Castle*.<sup>178</sup> The purpose of the voyage was to talk through the problems associated with the business with her son in the hope of finding solutions and making the tough decisions that needed to be taken. Her arrival coincided with the latter stage of the Black Poker's pregnancy which might explain why Clara decided against raising the issues. Instead she told Horace that she was concerned that interest in the cue sports was waning in Australia.

This news distressed Horace greatly but he was locked into playing commitments in London and wasn't sure how he could help. The Black Poker came up with three ideas. Writing articles incorporating explanatory diagrams for one of the local newspapers, license his name to an Australian billiard table manufacturer and a Lindrum versus Lindrum challenge.

'Would you play your uncle Walter for the Australian title?' she asked.

'Darling, if you can convince my uncle Walter, you've got me.'

Walter declined the invitation. Not even the *Mirror's* cheeky, 'Walter come down from your Ivory Tower', could get him to the table.

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<sup>178</sup> A vessel of The Dominion Line. The Dominion Line was founded in 1870 as the Liverpool & Mississippi Steamship Company.

A few weeks after her return to Australia Clara instructed Parker to write to Horace requesting he transfer three semi-detached cottages in Melbourne into her name. The plan was to liquidate these assets to keep the Lindrum name in lights. When Horace refused, Clara declared war. She threw a tantrum the likes of which Parker had never seen before. The tantrum was largely fuelled by Horace's refusal to transfer the properties, but it was also fuelled by his decision to get married without consulting her. Displeasure stored in the subconscious detonated a violent emotional outburst best compared to the explosion of a cellar full of wine bottles bloated by carbon dioxide.

'I have given my whole life for this boy and what does he do? He goes and gets married without telling me. When do I hear about it? When I see it on the front page. Why didn't he tell me, Parker? I'll tell you why he didn't tell me. He didn't tell me because he damn well knew what I'd say to him. Champions and family don't mix.'

Out came the newspaper article.

'Australian Sports Star – Horace Lindrum – marries Joy White, the organising secretary of the British Association and Control Council.'

Storming around Parker's desk, she crumpled the paper and threw it into the garbage bin.

'If he won't transfer those properties himself, I'll transfer them for him. Get out the deed box, Parker.'

Buddha was right. It is better to travel than to arrive because you never know what might be waiting for you at your destination.

Whilst Clara was getting on with it on one side of the world, her son was getting on with it on the other. Within days of winning the World Professional Snooker Title, the Savile Rowe tailors were fitting Horace out for his official tour. During the official tour he covered a vast territory, including Rhodesia, Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Malta, India, Ceylon, Thailand, Malaya,

New Zealand and Australia. He met his mother briefly during the visit to Australia. She said nothing of her intentions.

Part One of the journey – Destination: Bombay.

Mode of travel, the *SS Chusan*<sup>179</sup>, a handsome vessel of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.

Dear Horace,

We have arranged for your wife, Joy, and daughter, Jan to accompany you through the entire itinerary in the South of India but, as it can be very, very cold in the North at this time of year we thought they might prefer to remain in the south of the country? Let me know.

Looking forward most eagerly to seeing you again and I know that, when you leave us, you will take with you more than pounds, shillings and pence. You will have the love, admiration and affection of our people. Sir Razik Fareed and Mr. Husaair have assured me, a wonderful welcome awaits.

Sincerely and with kindest regards,  
M.M. Begg, Chairman  
Billiards Association & Control Council, India

Joy's diary set out just how much fun we had:

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<sup>179</sup> Built by Vickers Armstrong Limited, Barrow in Furness, United Kingdom for the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, London and launched on June 28, 1949, *S S Chusan* was the first ship to operate a regular mail service between Britain and Australia.

Jan took easily to shipboard life. The rougher the seas, the louder she laughed. Our first Port of call was Port Said.<sup>180</sup> With three hours available to us, we went ashore, hired an open horse carriage and settled down to some serious sightseeing. We visited the Cathedral of the Virgin Mary with its magnificent stained-glass windows and then went on to the glorious Salaam Mosque. Our guide at the Mosque was a charming gentleman who spoke impeccable English. He described, in perfect detail, the scene before dawn when his brothers came to wash themselves in the troughs of clean water before kneeling to pay homage to God. He then took us to view a copy of the Qu-ran. 'This is the Book,' he said 'in which there is no doubt since its author is Allah, the Creator of this universe, and Allah possesses complete knowledge. Allah understands it is a long journey to being human. To believe in Allah is to be grateful and of all the bells one can ring in one's life, it is the bell of gratitude that has the greatest ring for it is the bell of gratitude that celebrates our humanity.'

At the end of the tour, our guide's curiosity got the better of him. 'Sir, how many wives do you have?' he asked Horace. 'One. I have one wife,' Horace responded. 'One!' he exclaimed in horror. 'Sir, I have four wives, twenty-six children and ten grandchildren.'

After leaving the Mosque we took a brisk walk around the souk where we purchased half a dozen balloons for Jan before returning to the ship. Passage through the Suez was dreamy and, around 7pm, we anchored in the Red Sea. Horace and I took a stroll around the deck and found a place away from the

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<sup>180</sup> Port Said is situated north east of Egypt and extending thirty kilometres along the Mediterranean Sea, north of the Suez Canal. Rudyard Kipling once said: 'If you truly wish to find someone who travels, there are two points on the globe you have but to sit and wait, sooner or later your man will come along. Those two places are the docks of Port Said and the docks of London.'

world where we held each other close. I lived for these moments of intimacy with my husband.

We reached Aden in the late afternoon of the following day and escaped to say hello to some friends Horace had met on earlier trips with Melbourne Inman. They were lovely people and we talked and laughed for hours until, seeing I looked weary, (as young mothers often are), they walked us back to the jetty. On arrival at the steps Horace announced he would stay on, walk our friends home and catch the last launch.

Back on board, I went straight to the cabin where I chatted away to the babysitter until I realised the time.

‘Goodness, I wonder where Horace has got to? Would you mind staying with Jan a little longer, Joan, whilst I go look for him?’

Joan kindly agreed and I hared down to the gangway only to discover it had already been pulled away. The seaman-in-charge suggested I try the second gangway so I hot-footed it to the stern of the ship. The second gangway was still in position but, seconds after my arrival, several seamen arrived on the scene to unhook it.

‘Excuse me,’ I said, desperately.

‘I am looking for my husband. He doesn’t seem to have made it aboard’.

‘When did you last see him, Mrs. Lindrum? Are you sure he isn’t in one of the lounges? Or back in the cabin? You may have passed each other in the corridors without realising.’

That sounded feasible so I raced back to the cabin.

No Horace.

The ship was due for departure and I was now frantic, so frantic the purser referred the matter to the captain who ordered the radio room to wire the relevant authorities. Standing at the ship’s rail, peering into the darkness, around 10.50pm, a light appeared. As it drew nearer I could see Horace

standing at the bow. He was beaming from ear to ear and appeared totally oblivious to the fact he had held the ship's departure by twenty minutes.

'Darling, do you know you nearly missed the boat?' I asked.

He smiled back at me.

'Did I!' he exclaimed. 'Jolly good show.'

'There is a big penalty for holding up a ship.'

I was cross with him.

Really cross.

The following day we received a request to attend at the purser's office.

'Mmmmm!' I said, looking down at the note.

'I wonder how much you have cost us?'

Horace didn't seem to be the slightest bit concerned. In fact, on the way to the purser's office he told me of a prior occasion – during one of his tours with Melbourne Inman – when the pair had been forced to charter a speedboat to catch the ship.

'We had to climb aboard on a rope ladder with our cue cases strapped to our backs. The applause was deafening.'

I wasn't impressed.

'Good morning, Mr. and Mrs. Lindrum, thank you for coming down. I was just wondering what you would like us to do with all these?' Inside the purser's office a bundle of beautifully wrapped packages. Gifts from the Yemeni Association.

Glorious sunshine greeted our arrival in Bombay and, within a few minutes of docking, our cabin was a mass of flowers. I was bursting with excitement. I had never been to India before and had no idea what to expect. The experience was far greater than any I could have imagined and the memories of that visit so ingrained in me that, no matter what happens to my mind down the track, my soul will carry the inscriptions.

Shortly after the ship docked, the joint secretary of the Bombay Billiards Association – Mr. Rafeek Dina – came aboard with his entourage to deliver an official welcome. Garlands of flowers and leaves were placed around our necks following which we were escorted down the gangplank, through a guard of honour, and into a waiting car.

Horn blasting, Dina's driver sped through busy streets, past buses and between buses and between buses and 'puck-puck' bicycle carts and across footpaths and on to the Taj Mahal Hotel where Mr. Begg and Mr. Rutton Adenwalla and his charming wife, Mitali, a doctor of fine art, were waiting to greet us.

The next ten days were a whirl. Horace was playing three sessions a day. Not very well in the beginning. Within twenty-four hours of our arrival he had come down with a shocking virus and the hot and humid airs of India were sapping his energy. Fortunately, he managed to shake it off.

#### *National Standard*

Wednesday November 19, 1952.

#### *'A First for India'*

Horace Lindrum, world professional snooker champion, showed a glimpse of his class on Tuesday when playing R. K. Vissanju at the W.I.A.A Club.

Lindrum broke the pyramid and Vissanju sank three reds. The champion then cleared the table, with a spectacular break of 115, the first official snooker century in India.

Horace had recorded snooker centuries on prior visits to India but this century was 'Officially' recognised as being the first snooker century recorded under championship conditions. A magnificent silver trophy commemorates the event.

Joy's diary records the moments away from the table:

Our suite at the Taj overlooked the gateway to the city of Bombay and, in the evenings, hundreds came to enjoy the cool breezes and stroll between the Umbrella and Palmyrah Trees. From a small table in the window bay we took our somewhat hurried meal between playing sessions admiring the symphony playing out along the waterfront beneath us. Graceful women draped in glorious mirrored saris, peddlers hawking gay balloons affixed to long broom-like sticks, fishing boats bobbing up and down, ass-drawn carts in strange procession on return from the marketplace, herds of children flying kites and the sun, sizzling like butter in a burning hot pan, sliding ever so slowly into the line between sky and sea, unwillingly surrendering to thousands of twinkling lights.

On one of our few days off, we traveled to Juju beach in Ville Parle, which is approximately 12 miles (18 kilometres) from the City centre. Horace had talked of the beauty of Juju and promised me a visit. It did not disappoint. We strolled around the food market savouring the local delicacies. I settled on a thick vegetable masala with a great dollop of butter and slice of fluffy bread. Horace chose a sizzling kebab and potato patty. The patty had been mashed with garlic, chillies and coriander dipped in chickpea flour, fried until golden and spread with coriander chutney.

After lunch we walked down to the beach. I felt I was in Paradise. The sand stretched for miles and the sea was crystal clear and deliciously warm. There was nobody about and we were contemplating stripping down and going for a swim when our plans were interrupted. Hobbling on legs weaker than the trusses under the Bridge over the River Kwai, his left foot dragging behind the right, a one-man circus.

‘Sahib, Sahib,’ he called as he made his way towards us, the monkey on his shoulder clinging to the tiny fez perched on its head. ‘I am Achy. I am named after Achalesvara and Achintya. I am God of the Immovable and beyond comprehension.’ He was more Lord of the Seven Seas. I wished for a palette and a canvas for a subject like this one does not come along every day. His coffee-coloured face taut as the hide on a drum. His eyes, black as coal. His teeth whiter than sheets soaked for months in a pot of bleach. He had... Chutzpah. I could have said gall, nerve, effrontery, but how can you pass on a word like ‘Chutzpah’!

Chutzpah has no equal.

‘Sahib. You lovely wife. I give you lovely wife photo. See, look what I have with me.’ Like a magician whipping the cover off a birdcage, he whipped off the Cossack-like skirt around his waist revealing a small basket that he’d been hiding underneath.

‘Come, lady, look,’ he coaxed, plonking himself on the sand. I had a fair idea what he was going to do next and I was happy to keep my distance. Waving a reed with the grace of Daniel Barenboim preparing the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra for a recital of “Tales from the Vienna Woods”<sup>181</sup>, Achy lifted the lid. The sound from the reed was hauntingly beautiful.

‘You hold?’ he asked with a wicked grin.

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<sup>181</sup> “Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald” Opus 325, one of six Vienna waltzes composed by Johann Strauss II in 1868, featuring virtuoso part for *zither*.

‘Oh, God, he’s offering me a Cobra!’

With some considerable misgiving, I was persuaded to hold the tail.

There were a few little interludes like this one and I remember saying to myself whilst sitting at a table on the terrace at the Brindavan gardens in Bangalore: ‘I wish it could always be like this’ but Horace didn’t belong to me. He was the world’s property and breaks from the table were regulated by his demanding program of events. We stayed in Bangalore for two days then Horace travelled on to playing engagements in Madras, Hyderabad, Kakinada, Kolkata (Calcutta), Lucknow, Delhi and Jaipur.

There was trouble on the train to Hyderabad.

Potti Sreeramulu, a staunch devotee of Mahatmaji, had fasted to death in a last ditch attempt to force the Government of India to bow to public demands for the separation of the Andhra region from Madras.

Sreeramulu was much admired in India.

After losing his wife and child he had joined Gandhi’s ashram and taken an active role in the Indian Independence Movement. In 1930 he was imprisoned for participating in the 1930 Salt Satyagraha. Notwithstanding this horrific ordeal, he was known to walk barefoot for hours in the hot sun, no umbrella, carrying large placards demanding government action. On hearing of his death, hooligans decided to loot the Vijayawada Railway Station.

Horace described the events to me on the telephone. Eighty miles outside Andhra the train was forced to a halt. Men were lying on the tracks and an angry mob, some brandishing long knives, began stoning the carriages. I can’t tell you how relieved I was to hear he was safe.

‘What about your luggage?’ I asked.

‘The only thing I grabbed was my cue case.’

Understandably, Horace hadn’t given his luggage a second thought and all thirty-four pieces were still on the train. The Indian tailors are craftsmen of the first order. You can choose your material one day and your suit is ready to wear

the next. A blessing when you need dress clothes for your appearance in Delhi before President Rahebdra Prasad and his health minister Amrit Kaur. 8-00am the following day six tropical whites and a dinner suit arrived at the Great Eastern, Calcutta for the attention Mr. Lindrum. Three days after Sreeramulu's death President Jawaharlal Nehru declared Andhra a separate state.

#### Radio Interview Delhi

This is Ram Singh. Good evening listeners. I have with me this morning world professional snooker champion and professional billiards and snooker champion of Australia, Horace Lindrum.

'Good evening, Mr. Lindrum.'

'Good evening, Mr. Singh.'

'It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Delhi.'

'Thank you.'

'I would like to ask you a few questions. I hope you won't mind.'

'Not at all. It will be a pleasure.'

'First of all, please tell us what is a good age to start playing billiards.'

'Twelve. I think twelve is about the right age to get serious about any human enterprise. By age twelve the student is mature enough to take in what is taught by the instructor.'

'Ah, Mr. Lindrum, you are an Aristotelian. What does it take to be a champion do you think?'

'Hard work. There is no easy road in any profession.'

'And how does it feel to be the world snooker champion?'

'It is a dream come true.'

Whilst Horace was in Delhi, Jan and I went shopping. We purchased a Christmas tree and some really pretty decorations from the Grand Market. I will never forget my husband's face as he came through the door of our hotel room. He hadn't had a great deal of time for Christmas in the past. After Christmas Horace returned to his playing engagements. On the eve of our departure we were guests-of-honour at a dinner party at the Islam Gymkana. Mrs. Adenwala had taught me the essential arts. How to make a curry and how to drape a sari. For this occasion I selected a cameo pink and rosa quartz sari and an evening bag of red velvet and gold brocade. A beautiful evening, I understood what – Monet<sup>182</sup> meant when he wrote: 'I haven't managed to capture the colour of this landscape.' The colour at the Islam Gymkana was beyond descriptors. Canary yellow, cobalt blue, emerald green, fresh, jazzy, iridescent. Aside from the breathtaking fashion, warm greetings and superb hospitality.

Long tables dressed in starched white linen set under a black velvet sky dotted with thousands of stars, hundreds of flickering candles, large pottery vases of champa and cornelians, jugs of sherbet, tureens of curry, an assortment of rices including one with goat and aromatic spices, platters of tiny dumplings filled with mince meat, bowls of condiments, papadums, breads and luscious fruits. We ate and laughed and ate and laughed. After dinner, there was a bit of an incident. A little worse for drink, a rather pompous fellow leaned across at me and, with a smarmy look on his face, asked:

'Ah, Mrs. Lindrum, in all honesty, tell me, what do you think of India? Don't be afraid to say, we are all friends here.'

Insolent puppy, he clearly believed himself in some way superior.

I remained silent for a moment contemplating how I should respond. I couldn't smack him in the face but he certainly deserved a slap. Instead I served him a withering stare. Then – summoning the acting skills I inherited from

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<sup>182</sup> Claude Monet (1840-1926), French artist and father of French Impressionism.

Brian Gwaspari (a distant cousin and actor in many episodes of “The Gentle Touch”) – I ever so quietly, told him:

‘I am here at the invitation of a Sporting Association and I would not consider it in the best of taste to pass anything but polite comment about India and the Indian people. If you don’t like it here, young man, I suggest you hike it back to England.’

There was a deadly hush at the table. I am sure my hosts were shocked by my forthright comments. They were also secretly pleased for a quiet smile appeared at the corners of their mouths. The serve was long overdue. The ‘boy’ – for I can only refer to him as such – fiddled with the cuffs of his freshly-ironed shirt for a short time then drained his wine glass, made his excuses and left the party whereupon we set out minds to some vigorous dancing.

———We departed Bombay the following day for Hyderabad and Secunderabad where we visited the palace of His Most Exalted Highness, the Nizam.<sup>183</sup> It was whilst we were in the palace waiting for the Nizam to put in an appearance that I got myself into trouble. I had been lectured to be on my best behaviour but expecting a two-year-old to sit bolt upright on a poof for twenty minutes was a big ask. Expecting that same two-year-old to remain silent for that same period of time was too big an expectation.

‘Excuse me, when is the Marzipan going to arrive, he’s taking an awfully long time to get here?’

Later – largely because my legs were tired from walking through the Palace – I let loose and told the Indian Press:

‘I am sick and tired and I want to go home!’

That went down like a lead balloon so I was fortunate indeed to be allowed to tag along on the visit to the Maharajah’s palace in Mysore.

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<sup>183</sup> The Nizam was the fabulously rich ex-ruler of a Jungle Kingdom.

Our host on that occasion was a little man who looked like any one of the poor merchants scurrying about the local bazaar except for his eyes. I wanted to ask whether he could see inside my soul but managed to bite my tongue. As for his palace, well, that was an Aladdin's cave. Silver and crystal furniture, a solid gold billiard table, original paintings, elegant sculptures, elaborately decorated ceilings, floral textiles, heavy velvet drapes, mirrored hallways, glorious mosaic floors, ivory doorways, even solid silver seats for riding on the backs of elephants. Inspired by A Thousand and One Arabian Nights, every nook and cranny echoed Scheherazade.

Gone.

All gone.

Lost to the world forever.

Next stop, the famous Falle Face Hotel on the beautiful island of Ceylon and, from Colombo to Africa. Over the next two months we covered four thousand miles. Joy spent most of her time behind the wheel, driving from one destination to another.

The professional snooker challenge took place in Johannesburg. Horace's opponent was the South African Professional Billiards Champion Peter Mans (Snr.). During the challenge, Horace was asked to make a broadcast. The rehearsal was left in the hands of a young lad who knew absolutely nothing about snooker. The first red went into the middle pocket bringing the cue-ball behind the black and into an excellent position near the top right-hand pocket. The rest was needed for the next shot. Horace called: 'Rest, please' (a 'Rest' is a long cue-like instrument used to rest the cue on in lieu of the hand bridge when the cue ball cannot be reached). Thinking Horace was asking for a rest from the table, young Jim put down the numerous wires he had been holding on the ground, sniffed and proclaimed loudly:

'My goodness, don't these professionals tire easily,' which, as you can imagine, brought the house down.

Wherever Horace went, the press went with him. There was enormous interest in his record-breaking ability. There was also a lot of interest in his wife's magic carpet ride.

### Lindrum 'The Ace' – deadly accurate potting

Australian snooker wizard, Horace Lindrum, has taken the Basutoland snooker title with a break of 139 made at the Memorial Institute in Maserum in the presence of the Resident Commissioner, Mr. A. G. T. Chaplin. That brings his century tally to nineteen this trip.

In total to date, he has notched up six hundred and sixty-six centuries in public performance.

### 'Maestro' is making his mark

He's eyes always seem to be smiling and for good reason. The Australian champion is blitzing it! At the Toristo Hotel in Standerton last night, Horace Lindrum of Australia took the South African snooker record with an outstanding break of 143.

There are many memories from this trip. Escaping the baboons at the Victoria Falls, hunting crocodile on the Zambesi, driving at dusk in the National Kruger Park, a giant bird flying at the windscreen, a herd of elephants stampeding down the side of the roadway, walking into a billiard room for a practice session to find a ten-foot native boy standing on top of the table beating the cloth with a birch broom on instruction to ready it for 'The great Lindrum.' Then there was the 'joy flight' with Rex Johnson.

Horace had met and played Rex a number of times on his previous visits and secretly hoped that one day Rex would invite him to ride in his plane.

When the invitation finally came, he jumped at it. To his surprise, Joy wasn't too keen and he had to do quite a bit of coaxing.

'The scenery will be visually spectacular, darling,' he told her. 'Think of all the amazing photos you will have to show to your Mum and Dad.'

She finally agreed and they met Johnson at Mtubatuba airfield.

'Horace, Joy, good to see you, I'm afraid the weather isn't doing us any favours. It will be a bit bumpy. Are you up for it?' They nodded.

Rex strapped them in then climbed into the pilot's seat. Seconds later, the engine roared into life and they taxied onto the runway and took off to the north. Once airborne the craft quickly gained speed.

'If you look to starboard, you'll see the sugar farms and, to port, the swamp-lands. In a short time, we'll reach the St. Lucia River. Get your camera ready...There's a few Mick Molloy's (sailing craft) to windward.

Good day for it.'

Rex was clearly at home in the wide blue yonder.

'Ah!' he exclaimed. 'There they are.' He was tracing a line of footsteps at the water's edge. Frolicking in the surf, a group of happy-go-lucky blacks. Terrific body surfers, they were propelling their bodies forward onto the breakers and riding them into the shoreline.

'Let's give them a stir.'

Neither Horace nor Joy knew what a stir meant but they felt the downdraught. The boys knew the game and they played along splendidly. They ran from the water, placed their palms in prayer position and rattled their knees. When the engine kicked in to a vertical climb, they hooted and waved and beat their legs with their fists.

'Oh, my goodness, Hello You!'

Flicking the plane away from the beach, Rex directed their attention to a sand bank on the other side. Sunbathing on a huge mound, the largest crocodile imaginable. 'He's a killer that one. Shall we take a closer look?'

On the first fly over, the croc didn't take any notice. On the second, he opened his jaws so wide Horace was sure they were going to be swallowed up. Joy turned a terrible shade of green and Horace was forced to hand her a brown paper bag.

'Will you be okay? Can you stick it out, old girl?' he whispered. She nodded.

'You can do it', he said reassuringly. 'Let's show Rex what we're made of'.

Loop the loop.

Rex was completely oblivious to the sea-sick passenger in the back.

'Hippo coming,' he yelled.

Reverse Cuban Eight.

'Rhino over there.'

Avalanche.

Later, over a hot toddy and a Bunny Chow<sup>184</sup>, he confided he was getting his own back for Horace beating him at billiards.

'Let me make it up to you.' Rex offered. 'I'll take you and Joy tribal dancing before you go on to Potchefstroom.' They needed more than one application of liniment after that little episode.

At Potchefstroom<sup>185</sup>, Horace's exhibition captured the imagination of sweet-faced native named Matuba. After the exhibition Matuba approached him and asked to see the basket. Horace handed him the trick-shot basket and watched as he inspected it closely.

'Master, you do trick again.'

Horace executed the shot.

'Master, I see basket again?'

'Certainly.'

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<sup>184</sup> Traditional South African dish comprising curry served in hollowed-out loaf of bread.

<sup>185</sup> Potchefstroom is approximately seventy miles from Johannesburg.

He repeated the examination turning the basket every which way.

'Master, you Tokoloshe.<sup>186</sup> You basket Tokoloshe.'

'Matuba, what does Tokoloshe mean?' Horace asked.

'You billiards witch, Master.'

The press ran with the headline and the nickname stuck.

En-route to Umbukwe Tobacco Farm, the Billiards Witch was confronted by three obstacles. A flood. Most unusual for the time of year. A large floating log that turned out to be a crocodile and a spot of mechanical bother.

Thankfully, the owner of the property where we were staying had met up with us ten miles back and told us to follow him in. When he failed to see the car in his rear vision mirror, he turned around and came to investigate.

People in the remote areas of Africa learn to be pretty handy. There's no alternative other than to learn to do it yourself. Townsend was a curate's egg who could do just about anything. One of his major achievements was a beautiful handcrafted billiard table which he had constructed from fossilised logs found on the banks of the Zambesi. His neighbours admired the table but they didn't have a good word to say about his generator. For Pete's sake, what was wrong with the kerosene lamp!

Leaving the farmhouse, we moved onto Salisbury and from Salisbury to Umtali. There are no words to chronicle the beauty of Umtali. In the early morning the scenery on the drive on the winding mountain road to Leopards Rock is unfathomable. At the top is a hotel surrounded by well-laid lawns, a golf course, tennis courts and – as far as the eye can see – mountain ranges of indescribable colour. Here we sat, under a bright sunshade, and forgot the world until the gentle 'click, click' from the nearby billiard room reminded Horace that he needed to be somewhere else.

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<sup>186</sup> "Tokoloshe" in Zulu and "Tikoloshe" in Xhosa.

Bulawayo to Jo'burg and...

'Oh, my Lord, I have forgotten my cue case.'

'You're not serious, my darling?'

'I am afraid I am.'

As I've said, Joy was used to driving long distances so back she went, a journey of eight hundred and forty miles. All was well to Bulawayo, however, on the return journey, there was trouble. It was sunset. Not a good time to be on the road.

'Oh, dear, what to do?' Joy thought to herself.

In the split-second that it took to think that thought, there came a rap at the window.

'Having a spot of bother, are we?'

A distinguished looking gentleman in full dress suit was peering into the window and signalling to Joy to wind the window down.

'I said, are you having a spot of bother?' He repeated in his perfect Oxford English accent.

'So it would seem,' she responded. 'I have no idea what is wrong with her.'

'Let's take a look shall we? Pull up the bonnet.'

Joy pulled the lever.

He tinkered around under the bonnet for quite some time.

'Start her up.'

Berroom, berroom...

'Ripping. You should be tickety-boo for Jo'burg.' He closed the boot and came around to the open window.

'Might I suggest, my dear, that you have her looked at by someone who knows what they're doing as soon as possible after your arrival. Maintenant! Wind up the window. Lock the doors. Keep to the speed limit and – Tally ho!'

'Thank you so much.'

Joy went to wave goodbye but there was nobody there. No man. No car. No dust on the road. 'Where did he go? And how did he know I was going to Jo'burg?' she asked herself.

There are no answers to some things in life.

'Another 15 centuries under his belt, Lindrum leaves today for the land of the Long white Cloud.' On this visit to New Zealand Horace had the enormous privilege of playing at Parliament House in Wellington. However, it was on his previous visit to New Zealand that the then Prime Minister the late Mr. Fraser and members of Parliament, presented him with his leather cue case.

Mr. Lindrum, it is with great pleasure that we present this cue case to you with our deepest gratitude for your wonderful work in nurturing good trade relations between Australia, New Zealand and the Mother Country.<sup>187</sup>

Horace said he always felt at peace with the world in New Zealand. He believed there was, to quote: 'A tranquility in the heart of the people; a rare quality in this atomic-minded world.'

In January, 1953, the *Strathnaver*<sup>188</sup> docked at Port Melbourne. Despite the heat, hundreds of people had turned out to greet family and friends. Standing at the rail on the upper deck, Horace searched the sea of faces below, thinking to himself: 'How nice it would be if someone from the family was here to say,

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<sup>187</sup> Wool was big business in those days. It took five yards of finely spun wool to cover a billiard table.

<sup>188</sup> Built by Vickers Armstrong in Barrow, Furness, United Kingdom, *RMS Strathnaver*, later *S S Strathnaver*, was the first in the "Strath" class – superior technology to their predecessors, including direction finding equipment, echo sounding, gyrocompass and advanced turbo-electric equipment, enabling them to increase speed by 3 knots. Launched by the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company on February 5, 1931, *Strathnaver* was also the first of five sister ships which came to be known as the 'The beautiful White Sisters'.

‘Welcome Home’. Then Joy grabbed his arm and excitedly pointed to a figure dressed in a light grey suit. Horace knew instantly it was his uncle Walter. He knew by the hat. Walter always wore his fedora distinctively. June was with him. He had met June on a previous occasion and, despite the heat, she was still courting what had become her trademark fox stole. Horace was looking forward to seeing Melbourne again. He was the proud owner of three small terraces, numbers 40, 54 and 56 Page Street, Albert Park. At least, he thought he was the proprietor of three houses in Page Street.

Melbourne was abuzz with news of Walter. His charity work was worthy of attention. The fundraising of other family members was equally impressive but, for whatever reason, there was an obsession with Walter’s efforts. I think this was partly because of Walter’s very strong connections at the top end of town and his position within the Masonic Temple. According to the reports he had raised twenty-five thousand pounds, bringing his total to a little over a hundred thousand pounds, a lot of money then.

But whilst the press were interested in Walter’s fundraising activities, they were more interested in his divorce proceedings and, to add spice to the story of Walter’s divorce, dug up his past.

Walter Lindrum, who is playing in a tournament at Bristol, left for London at midnight, and was married at the Henrietta-street registry office at lunch time to Alice Hoskin, a 27-year-old Victorian. Clark and Gertrude McConachy and two other friends were the only ones present. Lindrum will resume play in the tournament on Monday, dispensing with a honeymoon. He hopes to spend the summer in England to watch Larwood exploiting the leg theory. Though Lindrum has taught his bride to play billiards she prefers swimming and tennis.

TWENTY YEARS on and the honeymoon is OVER!

Walter Lindrum accuses Alice of adultery.

Alice (Pat) has counter-claimed on the ground of desertion.

‘Lipstick on his Collar’ was the phrase that caught the public imagination. Truth or lemon juice and sugar crystals?

How would you ever know! History is full of stories.

His Honour Mr. Justice Martin declared the content of the affidavits peculiar and told the parties:

‘For the life of me, I have absolutely no idea what you two are going on about.

My advice is, stitch up the problem. Think of your reputations,’ he cautioned.

‘Divorce is an unsavoury matter.’

Walter dug his heels in.

So, too, did Alice.

The judgment made interesting reading.

However acute the petitioner is on the billiards table, in the witness box he showed he has a poor memory and very slow mental reactions. Notwithstanding, he satisfied me he was trying to be honest.

A relatively short time after the decree became absolute, Walter embarked on another sexual odyssey. The object of his affection this time was Beryl (June) Elaine Carr, a legal secretary in the employ of Freehill, Hollingdale & Page. Six years later, Walter was six feet under. Dead without a Will leaving the punters betting 100-1 on ‘Who Killed Walter Lindrum’ and Hubert Opperman cycling Old Melbourne Town to raise money for a headstone. Whether Opperman was commissioned by John Wren, I cannot say. What I can say is Wren was the driving force behind the fundraising campaign.

To this day I can still hear my great-uncle's laughter.  
'Top of the table all my life and what do they do when I'm dead? They put a bloody marble billiard table on top of me!' Perhaps they wanted to keep him down!

Weeks prior to hearing the application for dissolution of Walter's marriage the judge bumped into the Prime Minister. Where they bumped into each other isn't really clear. I seem to recall something about poached Scottish Salmon and new potatoes at the Royal Automobile Club but I am not hundred-per-cent. After discussing the tawdry details of Walter's divorce, splattered across the front page, Sir Robert Menzies<sup>189</sup> returned to his office and picked up the telephone. Walter was in the billiard room when the call came in. 'It's for you, Walter. It's the Prime Minister.' Sir Robert asked Walter to attend at his offices. Walter thought a knighthood was in the offering. He was right save it came with a condition. He had to withdraw his divorce petition. Walter was flabbergasted to learn that his friend would withhold the honour if he refused the request. 'I am sorry, Sir, I can't do what you are asking of me. My private life is my private life.'

Menzies lay his palms upon his desk and rose to his feet. He was a tall man who played a good game of billiards and he liked Walter so what he was about to say and do would not sit comfortably. Walter had been good to him. He had helped him to get the National Security bill passed through the parliament by coercing a member of the opposition to engage in a game of billiards. When the division bell rang, the member was so focused on the game he simply didn't hear it.

'Very well, Walter. It is your decision. Good day to you.'

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<sup>189</sup> Sir Robert Gordon Menzies KT, AK, CH, FAA, FRS, QC (1894-1978). A liberal politician, Sir Robert became the 12th Prime Minister of Australia and remains Australia's longest serving Prime Minister (1949-1966).

Menzies waited for Walter to go then he sat down and thumped the desk with his iron fist. An hour later he picked up his pen and put a line through the KCB. Knight Commander of the British Empire became Order of the British Empire

There is not much to report on our voyage back to the UK.

Gulli Gulli man in Port Said.

Golliwog in Malta...We were home before you could say, Jack Robinson!

The boat train from Southampton pulled into Waterloo Station on February 27, 1954. Joy looked out the window. Heavy snow lay on the platform. I heard her sigh. It was a big sigh. A sigh tinged with melancholy. Horace squeezed her hand.

‘There are plenty of good times ahead. Look forward, old girl, not backwards,’ he comforted.

I was excited to be home too. I was looking forward to seeing my grandparents and sleeping in my own bed. My grandparents couldn’t believe how much I’d grown. I guess that’s because they were forever popping in and out of my life in those early years or, should I say, I was forever popping in and out of theirs. Naturally, they were overjoyed to see us and wanted to hear all about the tour. It occurs to me I haven’t told you very much about the Official Tour. The reality is there is so much to tell it is impossible to tell it. The following extracts will give you a feel for it.

Press cutting report of speech by

Mr. V. C. Gopalaratnam

*Indian Express*

December, 1952.

I have watched most of the world champions but I am absolutely certain that no one can claim to have the extraordinary charming personality of Lindrum and his almost magical wizardry of the cue in snooker. I do not think the piston of a first class locomotive could be so correct as his cue when it moves forwards and back without the least bit wobbling.

I think Lindrum is not only a fine billiards player but a great sportsman and a very delightful gentleman.

From the Australian High Commissioner in London, 1952.

My mail has brought me a letter from Mr. John C. Bisset, the Chairman of the Billiards Association and Control Council, London, in which he quotes the eloquent tribute paid to you by the Chairman of the Billiards Association of India.

May I add my own felicitations to those of the Chairman on your outstanding success in the world's snooker championship.

So long as there is a Lindrum wielding a cue – and I hope there always will be – Australia's name will remain in the forefront of the world of billiards and snooker.

——Four months after our return to the United Kingdom Horace received a letter from William Parker.

June 3, 1954.

Dear Horace,

Your mother is not well. She contemplates leaving Sydney on the *Himalaya*<sup>190</sup> on the July 10 for the dual purpose of trying to regain her health and to see if it is at all possible to induce you and your family to return to Australia. She is prepared to give you a half share in the business and let your wife take an active part in its management.

If there are any points on which you would like further information, do not fail to let me know.

Kind regards

Horace was surprised by the content of this letter. He had met up with his mother during the Official Tour and Clara had flatly refused to talk business.

Twenty-four hours after her arrival in Britain they met for afternoon tea at the Ritz. They talked the boycott. They talked highlights of the Official tour. They talked Lindrum's in Pitt Street. Horace told his mother the business, in its present form, was no longer viable and litigation with the landlord should be avoided. Clara couldn't believe what she was hearing. She had fought long and hard all her life to keep the Lindrum name in lights. She never expected her son to tell her to walk away.

On December 9, 1956, Lindrums' in Pitt Street closed its doors but Clara refused to give up the fight. Embarking on a full-frontal attack against the gambling industry, she was featured in *The Sun-Herald* with a fist held high in defiance. Journalist Noel McDonald reported:

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<sup>190</sup> *S S Himalaya* was built by Vickers & Armstrong Limited, Barrow in Furness, United Kingdom for the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, London. Launched October 5, 1948.

### 'New Boss of Billiards'

The First Lady of the Billiard Rooms, Clara Violet Lindrum, clenched her fists this week and got ready for a tough battle. Just back from London she has inherited sole control in Australia of the world's most traditional male sport. Billiards. And she intends to make same "respectable". To quote: "A game for nice gentlemen and nice ladies."

She told me: "I'm going to do some cleaning up around here. In some of the billiard rooms of today, the game is played by roughs and hooligans. Actually, some of them are not billiards rooms, they are gambling dens. As a consequence, billiards in Australia is dying. Australia once had the greatest players in the world. Now that I am in charge players will have to shape up or ship out. And, as for those awful gambling machines, I just won't tolerate them."

Some of Sydney's billiard room owners (who incidentally denied the "DEN" accusation) said Miss Lindrum's organisation will be widely boycotted.

One city owner confided:

"Violet's a fanatic for strictness and it doesn't wash these days, but you have to give it to her, she's right in some ways. You hear police saying that billiard rooms are haunts for criminals."

A representative of the Billiard Control Union of New South Wales, with which most clubs are affiliated, told me:

"We'll probably go along with her. But she won't get us going over to her side. It will be a bloody battle if she tries."

I imagine Clara making her way across Hyde Park, past the Archibald Fountain, down Elizabeth Street and into Martin Place. She is shaking like a leaf. 'This is not going to be easy,' she is saying to herself. 'Horace will have a string of questions and I won't have the answers. I told him I would go down with the ship. What I didn't tell him is that – whether he liked it or not – he was

going down with me. He's got to understand. At least, I've got to try to make him understand. I had to fight to the death. "We" had to fight to the death.' Her mind is racing as she pushes her way through the revolving doors of the Hotel Australia. She finds Joy and Horace waiting for her at the reception desk.

'My little sweethearts. I'm sorry to keep you waiting,' she gushes.

Clara admires Joy's suit. Blue is definitely her colour. She also admires the magnificent cross she is wearing and asks whether it is Faberge. Joy tells her it is an original.

'Exquisite. You have good taste, my dear,' she tells her.

Apart from Clara marching into the kitchen with the Royal Albert teapot and telling the stunned kitchen staff they needed a lesson in how to make a pot of tea, the meeting was uneventful. Nothing was lost. Nothing was gained.

There were no arguments. There were no tears. There were no answers. Horace read through the lines. His mother had exercised his power of attorney and liquidated all his assets to prop up the business. The houses in Page Street, the flats in Greenwich, his savings, Packard car – all gone. Poor woman had been fighting a losing battle. People no longer wanted to spend long hours bent over a billiard cue. Instead, they wanted to sit like couch potatoes pulling the handle of a Clubman.

Loss of his assets was a terrible shock. Horace had worked twenty-nine years for nothing. He forgave his Mother. He loved her too much to do otherwise.

Two weeks after hearing the bad news, we were on our way back to Melbourne in a car Horace picked up at auction. We travelled through the night as Horace and Joy wanted to see Tom Reece – who had been out to Australia on holidays – before he returned to the Mother country. It was a good thing they made the effort as it would be the last time they would see their friend. Reece was cremated at Golder's Green Crematorium on Tuesday October 20.

After that, Horace was on the road for nine months of the year.

He took the call whilst on tour in South Africa. A big part of him was lost the day Clara died.

Back in London, Joy was busy typing articles, planning schedules, organising tours, writing letters and drafting promotional material. She was glued to the typewriter when the ambulance arrived to take her to Queen Charlotte's.

My sister was born on Tuesday January 8, 1957.

Horace returned briefly for the birth of my sister then returned to Africa. We joined him a short time later. He recorded his 498th snooker century at the Norstel Royal Snooker Club against the champion from the Northern Transvaal. The manager at the German Club in Pretoria was so excited and so confident that the 500th century would be recorded in his club he told the press it was going to happen and telephoned Joy to tell her to come to the club.

Recording a century against Captain Steyn van Roogen was not going to be easy but Dame Fortune was with him. Away to a good start, Horace got the measure of the table and started break building with a steady, consistent rhythm. This rhythm is much the same as the rhythm adopted by a golfer. The break stood at 98 and a strange quiet fell over the auditorium as if everyone had taken a deep breath and was holding that breath in a singular lung. When the green went down, the referee called the century. The final break was 138.

Horace was jumping out of skin until he saw disappointment writ large on Joy's face. She had so wanted to see her husband record the 500th century but didn't arrive in time. He vowed he wouldn't make the next big milestone without her. A few months later the *Rand Daily Mail*<sup>191</sup>, Virginia, South Africa, reported:

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<sup>191</sup> Founded in 1902 by Harry Cohen and based in Johannesburg, the *Rand Daily Mail* was purchased by mining magnate Abe Bailey. Journalists at the newspaper crusaded against racial segregation. Shrouded in controversy the *Rand Daily Mail* closed in 1985 after adopting an outspoken anti-apartheid stance.

Horace Lindrum the most travelled sportsman of his era has recorded his 728th snooker century. On his return to the United Kingdom he will make his film debut in *The Counterfeit Plan* alongside Zachary Scott, Peggy Castle, Mervyn Johns, Sydney Tafler and Lee Patterson.

*The Counterfeit Plan* was released on January 01, 1957.

Eleven months and eighteen days later, *The Music Man*<sup>192</sup> opened at the Majestic Theatre in New York.

After filming *The Counterfeit Plan*, Horace and Joy made the decision to reside permanently in Australia. Reaching this decision was particularly tough for Joy. She was leaving her family, her beautiful home and her country. It was also a tough call for me. I confess to not wanting to leave Hillcrest, my grandparents, my aunt and uncle, my cousins and my school friends. Perfectly understandable. Parry's Jerusalem was already embedded in my soul.

1959, Albert Park, Melbourne.

Life changed for me the day we walked up the gangplank of the *SS Southern Cross*.<sup>193</sup> Things would never be the same. Despite the fact that I had travelled all over the world for the first five years of my life, mixing in sophisticated worlds with important dignitaries, nothing could have prepared me for life in the great South land. The change was dramatically revealed to me the day I caught a glimpse of myself in the giant mirror that used to hang in the front room of the family home at Albert Park.

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<sup>192</sup> *The Music Man* (1957) – based on a story by Meredith Willson and Franklin Lacey – was a smash hit on Broadway, winning five Tony awards and running for 1,375 performances. The success of the show on Broadway led to the motion picture adaptation directed by Morton DaCosta released on June 19, 1962 and starring Robert Preston.

<sup>193</sup> Built in 1955 by Harland & Wolff of Belfast, Northern Ireland for the UK-based Shaw, Savill & Albion Line, *SS Southern Cross* was launched August 17, 1954.

‘Someone, please tell me that isn’t me.’ A ridiculous muslin ribbon wound ever so tightly around my walnut, I looked like a giant fairy atop a Christmas tree. Reflecting on this memory I realise I was growing up. I really didn’t have an awareness of growing up but clearly that was what was happening to me and, as I sit here, dragging the past into the present I relive those moments in time.

Any minute, any second, they’ll arrive. I know they will. While I am waiting, daydreams and wanderings. Grand voyages in tiny ships. A chat with Garibaldi. A nod to Columbus. All the time drinking in the light of the street lamps flooding the roadway. A Silver Cloud<sup>194</sup> swings into the kerb and I push my nose to the glass. Feathers, graphics, motifs, the exquisite cut is unmistakably Chanel.<sup>195</sup> Silks, sensual satins, oceans of multi-coloured tulle, Elizabethan velvets trimmed with brocade. A bow here, a button there, a string of sea pearls at the back. Gowns cut low across the breasts. Ermines and minks dripping off ivory shoulders. Imagine lying in a gondola in Venice listening to Pavarotti and you will find that moment of serenity before Michael Peck’s *Archer*<sup>196</sup> takes his arrow to the bow.

Stomach filled with grasshoppers, I leap from the window seat and gyrate around the room singing Diamonds are a girl’s best friend. I am told to ‘stop it’ and turn into Rodin’s Thinker. ‘Don’t let the wind change, you might stay like that’ my mother tells me.

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<sup>194</sup> Designed by J. P. Blatchley, the Rolls-Royce “Silver Cloud” was the core model during the period 1955-1966. It was replaced by the “Silver Dawn”.

<sup>195</sup> ‘Fashion fades, only style remains the same’. This is a famous quote of Coco Chanel (1883-1971), a groundbreaking fashion designer of the early 20th century whose legacy lives on. The Chanel label has been designed by Karl Lagerfeld since 1983. Chanel’s life inspired the biopic *Coco before Chanel* (2009) starring Audrey Tatou.

<sup>196</sup> Michael Peck’s *The Archer* was a finalist in the Sir John Sulman prize (2014). The work ‘presents a figure pausing in a moment of contemplation. The boy, a hunter, stands very still. He is absorbed by his surroundings, aware of all his senses and place in the world.’

Bell's going to ring. Bell's going to ring.

Dogs are yapping and Dolly (Irene May Dunn, my second cousin) is out the back with a gun. She's already locked the cats up for the night. You have to lock the cats up otherwise they hide under the sofas, scratch you on the back of the legs and pounce on your chest in the early hours giving you one hell of a bloody fright. Sunlight to howling sleet, one swipe of a paw. Enter the Spanish maid juggling a tray with a plated assortment of canapés and a punch bowl. Pimms & Schweppes, half-a-dozen orange slices floating on the top. Roughly cut, they look like dead goldfish.

Huddled in a corner of the room a small group of men looking at life with serious intensity. Behind the Chinese screen, a look-a-like Margaret Rutherford<sup>197</sup> peering into a Crystal Ball.

She produces a miniature tarot.

'Shuffle, darlink, and give me four piles. Use your left hand not your right and tell me again, what is your birthday?'

'May 13, 1922.'

'Oh, look, darlink, he is coming. In two years you will be married and sailing off into the sunset. See, here is the ship.'

Sir Walter Raleigh aboard the Ark Royal.<sup>198</sup>

Ha! Ha! Ha!

In the centre of the room, a symphony of wild gesturing and facial grimace. Walt Kuhn's *Clown with a Drum*<sup>199</sup> sits on the sofa. Fat Sibyl stands in

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<sup>197</sup> British character actress Dame Margaret Taylor Rutherford, DBE, who first came to prominence following World War II playing Madame Arcati in the film adaptation of Noel Coward's play *Blithe Spirit* and Miss Prism in the film adaptation of Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Ernest*.

<sup>198</sup> Sir Walter Raleigh was executed in 1618.

<sup>199</sup> Painted by American Artist Walt Kuhn in 1942 and featuring Kuhn's iconic and haunting portrayal of the solemn clown, Pierrot, a character from Italian theatre's *Commedia Dell-Arte*.

the shadows stuffing herself with Cadbury's Lucky Numbers. Tripping the light fantastic, eligible bachelors hankering for a gander at Betty Grable<sup>200</sup> legs.

"Forget your troubles, c'mon get happy" ...<sup>201</sup>

The house literally shakes with excitement...

'Sit down, sit down, my friend, have a drink of the best.'

Don't ask me what a drink of the best was because I have no idea whether it was a shandy or a mustick in vodka. All I know is the hospitality at Lindrums was enormous. At the heart of that hospitality, June on the piano and Horace at the billiard table. I suddenly feel cold. I am haunted by the recollection. The clock on the wall is ticking. It's a Vienna regulator<sup>202</sup>...

"I've got a lovely bunch of coconuts" ...<sup>203</sup>

Auntie June's bony fingers are banging on the keys, her body heaving under the framed myth hanging above her.

My father came from Plymouth in 1838.  
Signed: Frederick William Lindrum II

There is no place in good history for fictitious mythologies. No matter how painful you should always tell the truth about your heritage.

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<sup>200</sup> Born Elizabeth Ruth Grable (1916-1973), American actress, dancer and singer, Betty Grable got her big break in the industry when she replaced actress Alice Faye in the motion picture *Down Argentine Way* (1940). For the next decade she remained Fox's biggest box-office success. Throughout her career Grable was celebrated for her beautiful legs.

<sup>201</sup> "Get Happy", composed by Ted Arlen with lyrics by Ted Koehler. Released by Judy Garland (1950).

<sup>202</sup> Unique handmade clocks from Vienna crafted from 1790-1910. During this period the design of Vienna regulators varied so Vienna regulators are distinguished by first determining whether they belong to the early, middle or late period. In the early period, for example, the design known as "The Laterndluhr" resembled a coach lamp.

<sup>203</sup> Novelty song composed in 1944 by Fred Heatherton; a songwriting pseudonym for a collaboration of English songwriters Harold Elton Box, Desmond Cox and Lewis Ilda. The music and lyrics celebrate the coconut shy at fun fairs. The song was featured in Judy Garland's last film *I could go on Singing* (1963).

“Show me the way to go home...”<sup>204</sup>

Joy sings along and flits from guest to guest with a platter of cucumber sandwiches. She looks absolutely fabulous in her blue and white spotted cocktail frock.

“Champagne Charlie is me name.

Drinking champagne is game...”<sup>205</sup>

Dolly appears. She is wearing a low-cut, figure-hugging black satin number which catches the eye of an admirer. Before the night is out they’ll be caught pashing in the bushes out the back. “Put another nickel in, in the Nickolodeon, all I want is loving you and music, music, music”.<sup>206</sup>

Harriet the-Hard-as-nails is dead.

The Ringmaster is dead.

Clara, ‘The Entertainer’ is dead.

The Great White Hope is nearly dead from the drink.

Morrell prowls like a wolf.

Me, I am sitting on the chaise longue, taking it all in. The goblins in my head recording every little detail. My great-uncle Walter has gone to bed. He isn’t one for parties. Social, when it suits him. Howard Hughes when it doesn’t. God knows how he manages to sleep through the racket!

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<sup>204</sup> Composed by English songwriting team James Campbell and Reginald Connolly under the pseudonym “Irving King” (1925).

<sup>205</sup> A 19th century music hall song composed by Alfred Lee with lyrics by George Leybourne. The song was first performed and popularised by George Leybourne in a controversial performance in August, 1866 when Leybourne appeared on stage at the Princess’ Concert Hall, Leeds, in a cut down top hat, similar to that worn by the murderer Franz Muller (a German tailor who was hanged for the murder of Thomas Briggs – the first murder to take place on a British train). The song also inspired a motion picture of the same name featuring British stars of stage and screen Tommy Trinder and Stanley Holloway (1945).

<sup>206</sup> Popular song composed by Stephen Weiss and Bernie Baum (1949). The most successful version of the song was recorded by Teresa Brewer and the All-Stars on December 20, 1949, and released by London Records.

“It was Fascination I know  
And it might have ended right then at the start...”<sup>207</sup>

Down we go, across the sea of memory, all the way to Tin Pan Alley<sup>208</sup>.  
George M. Cohan’s “Yankee Doodle Dandy”<sup>209</sup> remains my favourite. Through  
my mind’s eye I see my Mother marking out the steps and trying to teach me to  
run up the wall like the great Cagney.<sup>210</sup>

“Shine on Shine on Harvest moon up in the sky, we won’t have no lovin’ till  
January, February, June or July...”<sup>211</sup>

So many happy hours spent singing around that piano.

“So be sure it’s true when I say, I love you, ‘cause it’s a sin to tell a lie”.<sup>212</sup>

June goes to a break, shucks a few oysters, drinks a few champagnes,  
takes the last drag on a Sobranie sticking out of a diamante cigarette holder.

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<sup>207</sup> A waltz song, music by Fermo Dante Marchetti (1904) and lyrics by Maurice de Feraudy (1905) (English lyrics by Dick Manning). The song first featured in the motion picture *The House on 56th Street* starring Kay Francis and has subsequently featured in a number of other motion pictures including the French black and white film version of *Gigi* (1949).

<sup>208</sup> Tin Pan Alley is the name given to a collective of music publishers and songwriters who dominated the popular music industry in the United States of America during the 19th and 20th centuries (1880-1953) at West 28th Street, Fifth and Sixth Avenues, Manhattan. A commemorative plaque now marks the site on the sidewalk at 28th street between Broadway and Sixth Avenue. London’s West End also came to be known as Tin Pan Alley.

<sup>209</sup> Written by the man considered to be ‘the father of American Musical Theatre’, “The Yankee Doodle Boy” was composed in 1904 by George M. Cohan for the musical *Little Johnny Jones*. Another famous hit from this musical was “Give my Regards to Broadway”.

<sup>210</sup> American actor James Cagney played the role of George M. Cohan in the motion picture “The Yankee Doodle Boy” (1942).

<sup>211</sup> “Shine on, Harvest Moon” was one of a series of Tin Pan Alley songs which debuted in the Ziegfeld Follies in 1908. Married vaudeville team of Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth are credited with composing the song.

<sup>212</sup> Popular song composed in 1936 by Billy Mayhew and originally introduced by Fats Waller.

All very Mad Hatter's Tea Party and a whole lot Auntie Mame.<sup>213</sup> Guests to a Lindrum party came, saw and conquered. At least, that's what they thought they did. In reality, they slid like Alice into a world of sherry trifle and Guerlain.<sup>214</sup>

"Don't throw bouquets at me, don't....."<sup>215</sup> That was my mother's favourite song. I can still hear her singing it. I have shed a few tears peering into the rear vision mirror and, more often than not, have been forced to tell myself: 'Lindrum, for Pete's sake, don't get emotional.'

It is 1960, Flinders Street Station, Melbourne. Walter and June travel by train to the Gold Coast for a Magic Millions-styled race meet. Walter refuses to fly. 'Even if they tie that ruddy contraption to a tree, I won't get in it.' According to family legend Walter stopped off at a pub on the way to the races to satisfy a craving for a steak and kidney pie. A short time after devouring the treat he fell ill. A doctor was called to the hotel. The diagnosis was food poisoning. Like Phar Lap, Walter was a creative, bankable and exploitable personality who had all the makings of a folk hero. To say that he was a solitary hero would not be the truth. To say that he was the only Australian sporting phenomenon to pass from view in 'suspicious circumstances' would also not be the truth. Walter died, as Phar Lap died, of heart failure.

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<sup>213</sup> Reference to runaway bestseller *Auntie Mame* by Patrick Dennis inspired by real life eccentric aunt, Marion Tanner, whose life mirrored that of Mame. The novel inspired a Broadway production (1956-58) and motion picture (1958) by the same name starring Rosalind Russell in the lead role. Russell was nominated for an Academy Award and won a Golden Globe.

<sup>214</sup> Founded in 1828 by Pierre Francois Pascal Guerlain at 42 rue de Rivoli in Paris, The House of Guerlain was managed by family members between 1828-1994. It was then acquired by LVMH Group, a multinational investment corporation specialising in luxury brands. Guerlain is amongst the oldest perfume houses in the world. My grandmother, Clara (Violet) always used Jicky by Guerlain. Jicky was launched in 1889.

<sup>215</sup> "People will say we're in love", a song composed by Richard Rodgers with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein for the musical *Oklahoma* (1943). A favourite song of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip.

I remember feeling terribly sad when told of the loss of my great-uncle Walter. I loved the man who wandered down the hallway at Christmas time, a barrel of Minties tucked under his arm, singing:

He sent a note to Santa  
For some soldiers and a drum  
It broke his little heart when he found  
Santa hadn't come.<sup>216</sup>

Walter had grown up with toys made from jam tins pulled together with pieces of wire. How the world had changed! He was born into one world and had come to inherit another.

July 30, 1960.

It's a sad day for sport with the passing of billiards legend Walter Lindrum. Walter Lindrum, the greatest freak in any sport, the man who said, 'Billiards for Women will come as sure as night follows day. The barriers are not strong enough to keep them out'...is dead.

Walter's body was flown home to Melbourne in a lead casket. Three days later two thousand people packed St. Paul's Cathedral in Federation Square in Flinders Lane, Melbourne for a State farewell. Men and women from all walks of life, including the President of the Royal Children's Hospital, Lady Murdoch. The card on the heart-shaped wreath at the doorway read:

In deepest sympathy, Patti and Bob

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<sup>216</sup> A song popularised by British actress, singer and songwriter Dame Vera Lynn (1917-). Dubbed "The Forces Sweetheart", she is famous for her renditions of "The White Cliffs of Dover", "There'll always be an England", "We'll meet again", "A Nightingale sang in Berkeley Square" and "Land of Hope and Glory".

The Reverend Elliot from St. Silas's Church in Albert Park delivered the eulogy. Elliot didn't call my great-uncle a saint but he came close:

'Walter Lindrum's success in raising huge amounts of money for charity lay as much in the candor and simplicity of his character as in his consummate skill with the billiard cue.

He walked with Kings yet never lost the common touch. He was a man who not only gave of himself but he gave of his substance.'

They were all made of the same metal. My great-great-grandfather, my great-grandfather, my-great uncles, my father, they all knew what it meant to be glued to the one spot for eight hours a day. The leg cramps, the severe back and shoulder pain, the lactic acid build-up around the seventh cervical. It went with the territory. Service over, six burly rugby forwards heaved the casket onto their shoulders and, with the grace of Fonteyn, floated down the aisle to Mendelssohn's "Thanks be to God".<sup>217</sup> For those in the pews young enough to remember it seemed like yesterday that Walter had taken his taxi up the Mall to Buckingham Palace. On February 19, 1931, he'd played for the King George VI.

I wasn't present at my great-uncle's funeral. I was sitting, on my own, in the cinema across the road from St. Paul's watching Walt Disney's *Fantasia*<sup>218</sup>. In the fifties and early sixties it was considered taboo to take small children to funerals so you sent them to watch a mouse being tormented by an army of brooms and water buckets. But I was at the wake. Sitting on that same chaise longue. Taking it all in. After that I watched Horace complete the journey in the true spirit of 'A Knight of the Cue'.

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<sup>217</sup> Composed by Felix Mendelssohn, the Oratorio premiered in 1846 at the Birmingham Festival. The work was inspired by Kings I and II in the Old Testament and, more particularly, the life of the biblical prophet, Elijah. The German version premiered in Leipzig on February 3, 1848 (the composer's birthday), a few months after his death.

<sup>218</sup> A groundbreaking animated feature released by Disney in 1940, featuring animated film and classical music.

But things were changing very rapidly. The 'new' sporting model was progressively subverting the commandments of sport and radically altering perceptions of the sporting hero. This was largely attributable to the heavy influence of big business interests and increased political influence which is inextricably linked to nationalism. The acceptable pre-requisites for the sporting hero – physical, moral, social and moral excellence – were also being subverted and the 'hero' label, which is a reflection of our divinity<sup>219</sup> or, to put it another way, a reflection of the state of the nation's soul, was taking on new meaning. 'The [true] hero..[was] running up against a [brutal] world that [was] in no way responsive to his/her spiritual needs.'<sup>220</sup> The kind of world foreseen by British author George Orwell as depicted in his novel *Nineteen-Eighty-Four* (1949).

In 1963, at the request of the Australian Association Horace came out of retirement from competitive play to aid flagging interest in the sport in Australia. He competed in and won the Australian Open title that year. That magnanimous gesture opened the doorway to the successful "Pot Black Series" which heralded the rise of champion, Eddie Charlton's career.

On the back of the Australian Open win, Horace was on the road again, doing what he had always loved to do, entertain people but he was now being sponsored – albeit for a very small amount – by Tobacco companies. The Tobacco Industry had gained a stranglehold on sport, more particularly the sport of snooker.

Celebrity smokers – through print, film and television – had been promoting the habit for some time. Leo Burnett's Marlboro Man and

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<sup>219</sup> Campbell, Joseph, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (California: New World Library, 2008), 276.

<sup>220</sup> Campbell, Joseph, *The Power of Myth* with Bill Moyers, Editor Betty Sue Flowers, (USA: Anchor Books, 1991), 159.

advertising campaigns like smoke Craven A Virginia cigarettes<sup>221</sup> for your throat's sake – 'will not hurt your throat' and Play Safe with Philip Morris – more doctors smoke Camels – transported the 'art' of smoking to another level. It took more than thirty years before leaders started to listen to the voice of reason. By then, of course, the World War II soldiers who had become addicted to nicotine via the free cigarettes tucked into their C-rations were fathers of children and grandchildren smoking a hundred a day.

During Horace's long absences, air letters flowed in and out like waves on a beach. Reading the 'Dear Sweeties' says everything of my parent's deep affection for each other but I confide there were times when our mother was very lonely. In the December of 1963, we travelled to meet Horace in London. I am extremely grateful for the memories of that trip as it was time with my mother that I would never have again. Of course, I did not know that at the time.

In Colombo we were taken ashore in the pilot boat courtesy Sir Razeek Fareed. On the dock, a tall, handsome gentleman was waiting for us. His name was Mr. Huzair.

'Good morning to you, Madam,' Huzair said to my mother.

'Welcome. We are now taking you to the billiard room.'

'Billiard room!'

Ten minutes later, we pulled into the kerb in front of a big shed with a large crowd standing outside. As soon as they saw the car the crowd raced towards it. 'My friends, I ask you to give Mrs. Lindrum and the Misses Lindrum, your warmest welcome.' Huzair opened the door, bowed and extended his hand. Those unable to get into the room, stood cheek by jowl outside, craning their necks through glassless windows.

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<sup>221</sup> A brand of cigarettes owned by Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc (RBH) named after the Earl of Craven in 1860, manufactured in Canada, Jamaica, Vietnam and North Korea and, in recent times, associated with entertainment events like the "Just for Laughs" Canadian comedy tour. Craven A was a favourite brand during World War II advertised: 'Smoke Craven A for your throat's sake' and Craven A 'will not hurt your throat'.

Misreading my panic Huzair grabbed a cue from the rack and, grinning like a basket full of possum heads, offered it to me. 'Do you have a sugar bag?' I asked him. He looked all puzzlement but accommodated the request. Placing the bag dead centre of the table with the opening facing one of the middle pockets, I set up the balls, red in front of white and took aim. Red ball into bag, bag turned over and the ball rolled into the pocket. Delighted, the crowd clapped and cheered and I bowed and put the cue back in the rack. 'Would you like a song?'

"My Favourite Things"<sup>222</sup> must have seemed so strange to them.

On the morning of the December 17, we docked in Aden. At 7.30am, the temperature was 53 degrees. To say it was muggy would be an understatement. Dressed in our lightest clothes we travelled ashore in a small launch. Mum had arranged a tour and the Arabian driver and guide were waiting on the dock. Neither guide nor driver spoke very good English and their beat-up vehicle had seen better days.

'We go, we go. Asre'...Asre'...'

Past the airport. Past the palace of a thousand toys. Past leagues of tents and turbans. Past markets and bazaars crammed with hundreds of produce baskets overflowing with fragrant herbs and spices. Past make-do stands with ceramic pots and brass jugs dangling on long pieces of string strung from the sides. Past women shrouded in burqas carrying pitchers of water on their shoulders and curly-headed boys herding goats. My head out the window, the delicious smell of pancake and honey wafting up my nostrils.

Suddenly, the car came to a screeching halt and the driver announced with aplomb:

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<sup>222</sup> Composed by Richard Rodgers for the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *The Sound of Music* (1959). Based on the memoir of the family von Trapp, the motion picture of the same name (1965) was directed by Robert Wise and starred Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer. winning five Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director, a year after its release it became the highest grossing film of all time, overtaking *Gone with the Wind*. It held that distinction for five years.

‘The Oasis. May Allah be with you.’

‘May Allah be with you, alright!’

No lush palm trees. No flash tents. No dates. No pools of crystal clear water. A few boys riding donkeys and a funny, toothless old man with a wizened face, wearing a turban on his head and a nappy on his lower parts, sitting on a string bed, puffing on a long pipe and directing the bleating and banging that goes with driving a camel train.

At the time, I am not sure we appreciated the experience. On reflection, there was something bewitching and beguiling about those beggars of no importance; a poetry that cannot be found riding in glass and steel elevators.

Years later, the Black Poker confided she felt the 1963 trip was the turning point. When I asked her what she meant, she replied: ‘Men no longer escorted women to the dance floor. They didn’t even bother to offer their hand. I grew up in one world and you’ve come to inherit another.’ Seven years later Horace was still on the road and he was still an important state commodity as verified by the ‘Letter of Introduction’ duly executed by the Premier of the state of New South Wales. He recorded his 999th century in public performance early April, 1970 at Collaroy in New South Wales and on April 20 in the same year became the first snooker player in history to record one thousand snooker centuries in public performance, many of which were recorded in a world record time of 2 1/2 to 6 minutes.

Yet, despite his sheer brilliance with a cue and the sheer brilliance of his career, he continued to be plagued by the question: Is billiards the sign of a misspent youth? An idea which serves to highlight the schizophrenic nature of and, indeed, the conflict, division and controversy that has dogged the sport of gentlemen for a very long time.

Today, the controversy surrounding the boycott of the 1951/52 world professional snooker championship, for example, still rages with British players and their colleagues telling commentators on the BBC that: ‘If a championship

was held like that today, it would be a non-event.’ Quite an extraordinary statement when you take into account the short length of contemporary finals on tables with pockets that look more like ruddy big buckets than the pockets on a billiard table. As for British authors who allege the 1951/52 final was only one frame. That is pure, unadulterated rubbish.

On May 5, 2010, a BBC compere declared Australia’s Neil Robertson – who stood before the cameras wrapped in the Australian flag – to be the first Australian to win the World Professional Snooker Title. Robertson accepted the accolade with one qualification: ‘Horace Lindrum’s name is on the Trophy. In an article headed – ‘Only eye doctor knew: amazing secret of previous Australian to win world title’<sup>223</sup> – journalist Will Swanton penned the following response in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

We’re talking here about a globe-trotting, generous, larger-than-life master of his craft from the golden age of snooker. Someone who put the prestige of a world title ahead of cash. Anyone discrediting Lindrum’s 1952 world championship needs to indulge in a serious re-think. And consult the official record books.

To put it into context – imagine during the Super League war that only two teams stayed true to the Australian Rugby League. All those two teams could do was play one epic series to decide the champion. That’s how Horace Lindrum became world No. 1 in a marathon two-week play-off against New Zealand’s Clark McConachy (McConachy was, at the time, the World Professional Billiards Champion). It wasn’t his fault almost everyone else was consumed by Super League-style greed. Nowadays the British still try to discount the result but at the time the rebel players were branded ‘The Bully Boys of Sport’ by the British tabloids, who called Lindrum and McConachy heroes for respecting the traditions of the game.

Lindrum is listed as the official 1952 champion.

End of section!

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<sup>223</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 5, 2010, Sports Day, 22. [www.willswanton-only-eye-doctor-knew-amazing-secret-of-previous-Australian-to-win-world-title.com.au](http://www.willswanton-only-eye-doctor-knew-amazing-secret-of-previous-Australian-to-win-world-title.com.au)

Horace performed at the Royal Easter Show at Moore Park in 1974.

———They call him Maestro. Magician. Man with the golden cue. At sixty-two, he is still the consummate entertainer. A lifetime of practice has given him exquisite control of the audience. Set him apart from the rest. Four years ago, on this same spot, I watched him record his one-thousandth century with a break of 133. The headline read: 'At fifty-eight, Horace Lindrum remains King of the Table.' If you are like me, potting one ball is difficult. Not a hope in Hades of getting anywhere near a century! I come regularly to watch. To support. To admire.

Memories of a tiny five-foot-four Giant of the Green cloth with a mercurial smile who has been bringing happiness to people across the globe for a little over fifty years.

'May I carry your cue case, Dad?'

Off we go, walking side by side across the car park, talking about this and that.

Today I am forced to crane my neck to see over five hundred heads. Usually I manage to negotiate a position at the front. Not this morning. Fortunately, there are stands and I push my face into a tiny hole between the bony shoulder blades of those in front of me. 10.00am sharp and Dad goes to the table. He has two of the most beautiful hands I have ever seen. Smaller than Rachmaninov. Bigger than Elton John.

He tells the audience:

'At sometime or other, especially in your childhood, one or two of you have probably enjoyed an egg for breakfast.' He holds up an egg. 'This is the un-cracked variety! Let's see if we can spin it so it runs along the side cushion to pot the red in the top right hand corner.' He points to the red ball top table

right. 'Then let's see if we can make it travel along the top cushion to pot the red on the left.'

We all laugh. I've said I've seen Horace in action many, many times and these words always get the same reaction. You see, to the ordinary man, the feat he is attempting with his double-jointed hands looks 'impossible'. One British snooker player, Alex Higgins, if my memory serves me correctly, refused to believe the stories of Lindrum's trick-shot wizardry. When he finally got to see the Master in action, he proclaimed him as others had proclaimed him, 'The greatest exhibition player of all time'. Certainly, in my lifetime there has never been another Horace Lindrum. There were other Lindrums. All of them great. But none of them could hold a candle to the one we dubbed the Showman.

The egg runs along the side cushion, pots the red in the top right hand corner, then runs along the top cushion and, with a bit of a wobble, pots the red sitting at the left. The applause is deafening and Lindrum gives his trademark wink to the ladies in the front row.

'Ladies and Gentlemen, forgive me for stopping the proceedings. Allow me to introduce you to an old friend. The great sporting journalist from the *'Sydney Morning Herald'* – Mr. Les Wheeler. They call him the man with the golden pen. He has with him his beautiful wife, Barbara, and their new addition, son John.' More applause. All smiles, Horace radiates more light than the James Barnet Lighthouse.

'This is a little shot for you, young John.'

Horace picks up six colours for the steeplechase and spins the balls, one after the other, in quick succession, around the table and into the top pocket. He makes it look easy. It is far from easy. It took years of practice. The steeplechase trick-shot is one of my favourites and, calling on all my strength and my once pristine ballet skills, I force myself onto *pointe*.

Two balls thud onto the table, the others roll all over the floor. It is the only time I have ever seen my father lose control and I am certainly not

prepared for what follows. Gripping the cushion, he falls forward, removes his glasses which have clouded with great beads of perspiration, places them on the cloth and strokes his forehead with the fingers of his right hand. Then, his motionless body collapses across the table and slumps onto the floor. That's when I hear my mother cry out: 'Please God, someone call an ambulance.'

July, 1974

Joy stood in the doorway. Fragile and hollow-eyed, she was clutching a tiny box wrapped in brown paper and tied with string. I heard her whisper: 'There's nothing left.' Then, one by one, she climbed the stairs. 'Twenty-five years gone in a blink.' Later she confided: 'When I reached the landing and looked out across the billiard table it was as if there was a neon sign flashing NO LONGER IN SERVICE. She laid the package gently onto the cloth, walked to the cabinet, poured herself a scotch, placed a record on the turntable and, curling up on the lounge, let Dean Martin sing her to sleep.

Goodnight, sweetheart, see you in the morning  
Goodnight, sweetheart, see you in the dawning  
Goodnight, sweetheart...Goodnight.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> A song composed by British song-writing team, Ray Noble, Jimmy Campbell and Reg Connelly (1931). Over time it has been performed by many great artists including Bing Crosby and Dean Martin.

## Epilogue

'I often see angels in my dreams and hear my mother call me.' My sister and I burst out laughing. We had never heard our father speak like that before. Dad believed in God and had been known to enjoy a scotch at Christmas with Father Grady but he was not a church goer.

The laughter triggered a discussion on the after-life and a pledge that the first of us to die would send those left behind a sign. A few weeks later Mum and Dad went for a chest X-ray. Mum's card came back clear. Dad was asked to undergo a bronchoscopy. Mum asked us not to tell him the result but I can tell you, he knew.

Over the next few months we went to sleep every night preparing for the phone to ring but we were ill-prepared when it did.

June 20, 1974, 2.30am. I knew before I picked up the receiver that it would be my mother's voice on the other end of the line.

I got dressed and travelled through the Wakehurst Parkway, a dark and heavily wooded stretch of road between Balgowlah and Collaroy Plateau on the northern beaches. On the journey I observed what appeared to be a bright triangle in the sky. When I reached the family home my mother asked me if I had seen the triangle. We never did find out what it was.

According to psychiatrist, Carl Jung, symbols give meaning to the purpose of life. To mathematicians, a triangle is a three-sided object. To billiardists, it is a frame which organises the balls at the beginning of the game. To occultists, a triangle binds the earth with the heavens. To me, that triangle was the promised sign. My father was now on his way to that great billiard table in the sky.

A day later I visited my father's body in a chapel in Mona Vale. It was a strange experience. I remember thinking to myself, 'That's not my father, that's a shell' but I felt my father was watching me.

Dad's body was cremated at the Northern Suburbs crematorium on June 22. His mother had been buried in the Lane Cove cemetery across the road on June 22, 1957. The number of years between the death of the mother and the son equals Horace's age when he made his debut into the professional league. My eldest son, Michael, was born exactly nine months to the day and hour when I last saw my father. Interestingly, my second son, Robert, was born in 1988, 14 years after his grandfather's death; Horace was 14 when he won the Marbles Championship of New South Wales and my daughter, Samantha, was born 16 years after her grandfather's death; Horace was 16 when he made his debut into the professional league. Pure coincidence? We can never know the answer to that question.

Time is complex and no scientist has yet been able to master the concept. Perhaps Lewis Carroll's Mad Hatter was right. 'You can't beat time.' Certainly, there are some people who think time has beaten me. My father lived so many years ago. 'Who will remember him?' The important thing is, I remember him and I have lived long enough to pay tribute to champion, father and man. Horace's death not only sounded the death knell for the sport of gentlemen, but, ironically, just as Al Jolson's "Toot Toot Tootsie Goodbye" (1927) had bid farewell to the silent movie era, Horace's death bid farewell to a snooker era the likes of which we will never see again.

Joy took up the torch and completed the marathon, publishing Horace's international bestseller *Snooker Billiards & Pool*, a text that marked him as one of, if not 'the leading authority' on the cue sports of the 20th century.

During Horace's lifetime none of us could have foreseen the corrosive influence gambling/business interests may have had upon his good name and

reputation 'in death'. It is heinous that people waited for him to die before 'rewriting' the story of his life; excluding him from the Lindrum family story, remaining conspicuously silent on his record of achievement, rendering his achievements out-of-context and referring to him on occasion as the 'lesser' champion. This project takes issue with false and injurious renderings of the lives of decent men and women, more particularly, 'in death' when the deceased subject is unable to defend himself/herself.

The problem with rewriting a history is the Truth of that history always finds a way to bubble to the surface and, if you are a true Hercules, the legend of your strength and your sandal will emerge no matter how hard people try to suppress it.

What would Dad think of *The Uncrowned King*? He would give the same answer he gave my mother when she tried to persuade him to write his autobiography. 'My life [or any rendering of it] is for others to judge.'

## Chapter Ten

### Jan's Pilgrimage

I did not set out to write *The Uncrowned King*. Some twenty years ago I found myself deeply and profoundly impacted upon by my mother's efforts to keep our family story together and by the extraordinary level of care she had taken over so many years to preserve Lindrum record. This was no mean feat. The material evidence is substantial and her commitment to the Lindrum family is to be applauded given her own impressive family history and, indeed, her own personal history.

The stimulus for my writing initiative was the grab for the use of the Lindrum name on a hotel in Melbourne. That act bore all the hallmarks of corporate corruption. I do not propose to discuss the grab for the Lindrum name here other than to say my family name was hijacked.

I suppose it might be argued that my writing the story of *The Uncrowned King* was written in the stars. I was born into a family of champions and inherited the history / story of that family and was, therefore, destined to write the tale. Other family members could equally have written it and may yet write it with their own set of perceptions, memories and experiences.

Equally, it might also be argued this story is the product of pure coincidence; traceable to my entry into university in 2006 and, more particularly, my participation in a creative writing class in 2007. It was never my intention to study creative writing. To the contrary, my aim was to re-hone my performing arts skills. Creative writing was an option on the university timetable which just happened to fit with my electives. If I had selected a different subject, *The Uncrowned King* may never have been written.

Because of the enormity of the Lindrum story, and because of my attachment to it, I have experienced periods of great joy and periods of deepest

depression. Looking into the rear vision mirror is never easy, particularly when one is looking back over one's own life, a task that inevitably forces you to reflect on decisions taken on the journey through time. I have not always made sound judgments. I was late to mature. There were reasons for my intellectual incapacity but this is another matter that I am not going to go into here. I confide, I've frequently felt like throwing in the towel and, as I say in the book, on more than one occasion, I've been forced to tell myself: 'Lindrum don't get emotional.'

At the very beginning of the project the aim was to get the story written as quickly as possible in order to restore the Lindrum name and history to its once hallowed position which is something my mother wanted to see happen. Sadly, my mother subsequently slipped into a state of progressive vascular dementia and will never come to appreciate the restoration. I draw comfort from her reaction to her own life the day she turned the pages of a picture book we'd put together as a gift for her on her first Christmas in full-time care. She turned the pages slowly and carefully and appreciated the remarkable life being played out in front of her. A happy memory, it was beautiful to watch.

My first task was to wade through boxes of historical material in order to refresh my memory on those parts of the story that were familiar to me and to piece together the history of those parts of the story when I was not around. I then began to read widely on the history of the cue sports and to review historical and contemporary texts. It was in the research phase that I became aware that the history of my family had been re-written post my father's death in 1974. This upset me dreadfully and I continue to ask myself why anyone would want to rewrite the story of a great man or condense one hundred and nine years of unique Australian history.

There is grave danger in skimming the surface of a story as it is easy for readers to form false impressions about people, places and events. There is also

grave danger in overestimating one person's performance over another or focusing on a particular family member's weaknesses without sufficient background or analysis. These practises lead to writers rendering historical stories/ accounts out-of-context.

Willful fabrication breaches the dignity of personhood principle and serves to destroy a nation's soul.

Burying a history is heinous as the culprit escapes the provisions of the Defamation Act and lying contaminates the mind and robs the listener/ reader/ viewer of his/ her right to the truth.

Taking personal responsibility to right the wrongs of history is vitally important for 'Tyranny takes hold when men of conscience are silent.'<sup>225</sup>

After reading what had been written about my family and, more particularly, what had been written about my father and my great-uncle Frederick, it was obvious to me that these authors, editors and publishers had failed in their duty to research the subject matter and they had not stopped to think how their writing would impact on these champions' descendants?

My father once said: 'There is nothing wrong with individuality.' That is true. He went on to say: 'nor is there anything unfriendly about observing the rules of the game.'<sup>226</sup>

The art of biography – of writing lives – is predicated upon the art of scholarship. If the self feels power over the subject the self should reconsider the project because the aim is not the exercise of power or judgment over the Other rather the exercise of skill and artistry to understand a life in order to render an 'authentic account'.

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<sup>225</sup> Reference to the motion picture *Grace* (2014) – a French/ American biographical film drama inspired by real events – directed by Olivier Dahan, screenplay by Arash Amel, starring Nicole Kidman in the principle role of Grace Kelly and Tim Roth as Prince Ranier III. Words attributed to Prince Ranier III.

<sup>226</sup> Horace Lindrum, *Billiards and Snooker for Amateurs*, (London: Isaac Pitman & Sons Limited, 1948), 9.

From the outset the key question posed by my research was: How does one walk from behind a father's shadow to write the life of father, sporting champion and man, knowing, before one even begins the task that a 'biographer's view of his [her] subject inevitably influences the results of his [her] research.' Finding an answer to this research question was not easy and, in the end, I elected to adopt the strategy adopted by author Paulo Coelho in his book *The Witch of Portobello* (2008). I abandoned the idea of writing a traditional biography and decided to tell the story of *The Uncrowned King* instead. The result is a crafted reflection of fact; a philosophical and frank account of my father's life. As my father was a historical figure, his story is a bildungsroman; a story which charts his journey from womb to tomb in the cultural setting of his life, both from a public and personal perspective drawing, as it does, from the extensive resource currently in storage.

Through the writing process I came to understand the fine line between allowing the imagination to roam feeling and telling the truth of a story. I used fictional elements solely to fill gaps, paint historical frames and give personality to the characters inside my story, some of whom were drawn from history having crossed paths with my father professionally. Others were drawn from my imagination. The work thus springs from historical events, being the reality of my father's life, as well as from imagination, memory, reminiscences and a rich world of experiences, inherited and lived.

Finding the right balance was my greatest challenge because I came to the task from a theatrical background so the temptation to use theatrics needed to be tempered but there was no tempering the voice as it is my voice. Thus, the authorial voice is the voice of the stage rather than the page.

Notwithstanding, I worked hard to produce not just the truth of my father's experience as a member in the sequence of family but my own experience as a member in the same family sequence and the patterned interactions between family members. My story has a particular potency

because I felt my father hadn't been served well by historians or sports writers so, in part, telling the story became a kind of quest, to right the wrongs of historical representation, and to tell the true story. In essence, I wanted to record my father's life in a balanced way which located him in an appropriate history.

Of course, the problem for a daughter who has had a good relationship with her parents is identity flows certainly not in the same way that a removed historian might approach such a task. Consequently, there were times when I found myself free and other times when I found myself imprisoned by the writing process.

How could I ever write my father's life story and maintain my own objectivity?

A child at the peak of my father's fame, I grew up surrounded by his victories. I was proud to be associated with such a man, yet I felt weighed down by the responsibility this entailed and it is only in recent times that I have felt in any way worthy of membership in my family sequence.

For the purpose of this exercise, I overcame the conflict within myself by viewing my work as a piece of social history which required a methodological search requiring me to carefully plan the journey back to the past and map the way forward; observing historical facts – and speculating on my own truth which is what every observer does – and using my imagination to immerse myself in the worlds that existed before I was born, reflecting upon the memories I carry of people and events, appreciating that the light and shade of life makes it sometimes difficult to assess and come to any definite conclusion on changed and changing perspectives and valuing the “Vita in extremis”; what artist Ulan Murray<sup>227</sup> captures in his painting; a sense of power – being part of the family – and a sense of fragility and fear – knowing I only have one shot at telling the story and that there may be readers who won't warm to the way I have elected to tell it; preferring, for example, a more historical rendering.

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<sup>227</sup> Ulan Murray was awarded the Wynne Prize (2015) for his painting “Vita in extremis”.

I was not blind to the fact that my father's life may have played out differently if he had not inherited from his mother such a strong ethical and moral framework. He was presented with the opportunity to make a vast amount of money through competition sport. He chose instead to entertain people. For those for whom asset building is a priority that decision will be viewed as a poor one. The lives of others may also have turned out differently if my father had been around more frequently. I say this because the first trait of a good father is the ability to measure discipline and discipline is known to be an essential to character building.

It is never easy to bring up children on your own yet many mothers shoulder this responsibility. Often children reared in this circumstance make the early transition to adulthood. Problems can arise if those children are unprepared for that transition.

My father was an absent father. He was on tour for up to nine months of the year. Yet, curiously, miraculously, wonderfully, he was forever present in my life and still is.

As I have stated previously, his heroic qualities, the many references, for example, to his modesty and humility in the winning circumstance and his graciousness in defeat, the pristine manner in which he conducted himself in the name of the nation coupled with his talent with the cue which, according to Dr. Rudolph Brasch author of *How did Sports begin: A Look at the Origins of Man at Play* (1971)<sup>228</sup> saw him become 'the greatest exhibition player the world has ever seen'<sup>229</sup> and the exemplary manner in which he and his mother ran Lindrum's Pitt Street, Sydney, which Brasch proclaims to be evidence of 'their expressive love of the game' but, more importantly, – as a father – mark him as

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<sup>228</sup> Brasch in *How did Sports begin: A Look at the Origins of Man at Play*, (Australia: Longman Australia Pty. Limited, 1971) 44.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

a champion. The Lindrum family were lucky, indeed, to have a champion of such quality.

Through this journey I came to appreciate that families and families of nations do not exist, survive and achieve in isolation. Each member of the Lindrum family was dependent upon the other to hand down the billiards tradition. My father's 50-year career at the billiard table was symbolic of the whole. It was, therefore, paramount that I viewed his career through that lens as that was the only way I could hope to capture the trials and tribulations of what it meant to be Australia's leading billiards-playing family from 1865 to 1974.

At the end of the process, I reached the conclusion that the struggles in and through my own life were 'directly and fatally connected with the peculiar difficulties involved in [the production of] this work of art.'<sup>230</sup>

Standing now, I raise my glass to celebrate the lives of my forebears and express gratitude for my existence and for the honour and privilege of playing this small role in a story that still has many miles to travel.

Brasch said:

Fame is attained in the most unexpected ways. A man might spend his life in the service of an ideal but this is completely forgotten. And yet, one feature, least expected, might immortalise him.<sup>231</sup>

The distinguishing feature of *The Uncrowned King* was his preparedness to put the interests of the Other before gratification of the self. It is a tragedy

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<sup>230</sup> Irving Stone, *Lust for Life*, (London & Bristol: The Bodley Head, 14th edition, 1935), 155.

<sup>231</sup> Rudolph Brasch, *How did Sports Begin? A Look into the Origins of Man at Play*, (Australia: Collins Publishers, 5th edition, 1989), 189.

that, whilst many champions of the Horace Lindrum era were recognised by their nations, Horace Lindrum fell between the cracks; abolition of the British awards and introduction of the Australian award system during the Whitlam era. There are no posthumous awards other than for acts of bravery. Perhaps this is something that should be changed. Certainly, on historical evidence, Horace Lindrum was deserving of the highest accolades.

Australian professional billiards and snooker champion for over thirty-three years and a world professional snooker champion, Lindrum's incredible efforts in taking snooker to remote parts of the world where it had never been seen before, nurturing good relations with peoples and nations, using his cue to good ends (for fundraising across the globe) and upholding the commandments of sport, are to be applauded.

For me, there have been many lessons learned through the journey but, perhaps the greatest lesson is, the language of the self is the framework upon which we build the stories of our lives. Thus, the language we use in the parliament, in the school, in the work place, in the home and so on is critical to determining our identity, the quality of the legacy we bequeath to our descendants and the quality of the book that ultimately sits upon the shelf.

# Dissertation

Family, Nation, Sport:

Writing *The Uncrowned King*

## Introduction

I am the eldest daughter of world professional snooker and Australian professional billiards and snooker champion, Horace Lindrum. My father was born Horace Norman William Morrell on January 15, 1912 at the Royal Hospital for Women, Glenmore Road, Paddington, New South Wales, and passed away on June 20, 1974 at the Delmar Private Hospital, Dee Why (a suburb on the northern beaches, Sydney) after a three-month battle with bronchial carcinoma.

His fame at the billiard table can be traced through newspaper articles promoting Horace Morrell as Australia's new 'Boy Wonder' (1924) and his debut into the professional league as 'Horace Lindrum' at age sixteen (1928) when his first snooker century was recorded against his uncle Walter Lindrum who was the much older and more seasoned professional. Interestingly, many people have thought Horace to be Walter's brother, perhaps perceiving the two players as equals, whilst others have thought them to be one and the same man.<sup>232</sup>

The name change, from Morrell to Lindrum, was made at the behest of my great-grandfather Frederick William Lindrum II and my great-uncle Walter Lindrum who felt it would be good for publicity purposes if a younger champion, one capable of upholding the Lindrum tradition at the billiard table, entered the profession carrying the Lindrum name. Horace changed his name by deed poll in 1933, having attained the then legal age of twenty-one years. The deed poll was executed on September 12, 1933.

To date, no biography has been written about the life of Horace Lindrum. No autobiography was written during his lifetime. My mother Joy Lindrum,

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<sup>232</sup> Film footage on You Tube 'Walter Lindrum playing at home and doing trick shots' is actually Horace Lindrum. Reference is also made to the installation of Horace Lindrum's photograph in the Sporting Hall of Fame, NSW, in 1990. The program erroneously referred to Walter Lindrum. After my father's death the senior nurse who had cared for him during his three month battle with cancer wrote my mother a letter saying what an honour it was to nurse Walter Lindrum.

nee White, encouraged my father on several occasions to write his autobiography but his response was always the same: 'My life is for others to judge.' This statement says something of the man and, viewed in the context of contemporary sporting autobiographies, the philosophy of celebrity has changed significantly since my father's death.

Undisputedly, Horace Lindrum was a major national and cultural figure for over five decades, one of the true sporting greats who redefined the sport of snooker at a time when the politics surrounding such exploits were fiercely controlled by big business and wider national interests. His achievements are too many to list here but I have included a summary in the appendices. The rise of Lindrum's international career commenced with a tour of New Guinea in 1935 followed by his debut at Thurston's Hall in London in 1936 when he was introduced to the British public by the leading British professional proponent, Tom Newman. Lindrum's debut at Thurston's Hall coincided with a press announcement delivered by British champion Joe Davis to the London Press Club. It was here that Davis delivered the statement that 'billiards [is] as dead as mutton.'<sup>233</sup> His announcement signalled the dawn of the Golden Age of Snooker, an era dominated by Horace Lindrum and Joe Davis.

This dissertation examines the life of my father while, at the same time, interrogating the historical, political and cultural aspects of sports and sports identity in Australia. It will question just how closely sport is aligned to nationalism and what that means for a sport's biographer such as myself. In my case as the subject's daughter, I also examine just how family biographers approach their subject – from a position of objectivity, distance, filial intimacy or defensiveness – acknowledging that, irrespective of the relationship between the historian and his/her subject, every author's history must be coloured, in some small way at least, by their background and personal perception of events

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<sup>233</sup> Andrew Ricketts, *Walter Lindrum: The Phenomenon*, (ACT: The Walter Lindrum Syndicate, 1982), 131.

past and present. As historian Gerard De Groot says: 'All histories are inevitably troped, emplotted, figured-out and argued for from the historian's own position [consciously or unconsciously)...this is history not as epistemology but as aesthetic.'<sup>234</sup> Engagement is 'impressionistic'<sup>235</sup> at best [thus]...we can only know [the past] by way of representations.'<sup>236</sup>

The thesis is divided into two parts.

Part One of the dissertation is the memoir, a creative biography based closely on my father's life. The memoir is not written as a history but as a 'portrait' or 'gesture' and combines history with story, fiction and pastiche to weave a tapestry in the style of Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family* (1984).

Textually, the work re-creates history in the idiom of personal experience giving collective history meaning through the recitation of an individual life story acknowledging, as it does, that In this context I argue, 'the personal story is an allegory of national agency.'<sup>237</sup> I also confront an additional layer of complexity because of my father/daughter connection. In creating the biography, this special bond/blood tie with the story became both my greatest asset and my greatest liability because, in the practice of scholarship, objectivity is figured as an essential component. Mediating between the personal and the historical became my greatest test.

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<sup>234</sup> Gerard J. De Groot, *Consuming history: historians and heritage in contemporary popular culture*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 153. The term "emplotted" was coined by historian Hayden White in his work *Metahistory* (1973) to describe the process by which a history – for example, the history of the French Revolution – can be plotted to deliver different interpretations of the same event. White identified four plot-types, tragic, comic, romantic, ironic.

<sup>235</sup> Impressionism – a nineteenth century art movement that met fierce opposition from traditionalists. Identifying features are small, thin, visible brush strokes, open composition, emphasis on the accurate depiction of light in its changing qualities (often accentuating the effects of the passage of time), ordinary subject matter, inclusion of movement as a crucial element of human perception and experience, and unusual visual angles.

<sup>236</sup> Keith Jenkins in De Groot, 153.

<sup>237</sup> Geoffrey M. White, "Emotional Remembering: The Pragmatics of National Memory", *Ethos*, Volume 27, No. 4, The Pragmatic Turn in Psychological Anthropology, (December, 1999), Blackwell Publishing, 509.

Whether or not it is possible to produce an unmediated, impartial story when the identity of a person has been, to a very large extent, forged by the subject, is debatable. I argue through my dissertation, the relationship between biographer and subject is largely irrelevant provided the biographer adopts a scholarly approach to writing biography. Every author has a relationship with his/her subject so total objectivity is impossible, although some historians believe 'objectivity exists in the creation and in the substance of historical material.'<sup>238</sup> This belief directs 'attention to [an] intricate network of constraints (cognitive, ethical and institutional) upon which practitioners rely to 'distinguish history from fiction, scholarship from propaganda, or good history from bad.'<sup>239</sup> Good history being predicated upon a dedicated commitment to the production of a document upon which the reader can rely. Thus, I also argue that the true purpose of writing a life is to preserve the genuine version of the life and, in particular, those elements of the genuine version of the life that serve a didactic purpose within the biography.

I acknowledge the family is often, and in this instance is, 'the principal site for exploration'<sup>240</sup> and 'family history is about storytelling, passing on familial heritage and locating one's identity in space and time'<sup>241</sup> and I agree with British historian Michael Postan when he says: '[storytelling] is the overwhelmingly dominant form of representations of the past.'<sup>242</sup> But, as historians Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton point out, 'there is always an

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<sup>238</sup> Windschuttle in Douglas Booth's *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, (USA and Canada: Routledge, 2005), 30-31.

<sup>239</sup> Haskell in Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sports history*, 38. (Thomas Haskell, *Objectivity Is Not Neutrality: Explanatory Schemes in History*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 1998, 2).

<sup>240</sup> Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past*, (Ultimo: Halstead Press, 2007 and Gorman House, ACT), 20.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>242</sup> Michael Postan, *Fact and Relevance: Essays on Historical Method*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1971), 64.

element of caution about the veracity of family [national] stories. The reliability of the author “depends on the person” and memory does play tricks.’<sup>243</sup>

Memory is often rambling, it doesn’t necessarily follow in a coherent sequence and not all experiences in life are etched clearly on the brain. Vague memories or no memory at all of specific events leads to speculation based upon whatever evidence is available and, potentially, to false conclusions. False knowledge embodied inside a text gives the illusion of knowledge which is why it is critical for consumers of history to be analysts and for writers to adopt the ethical memory check outlined by Sheila Fitzpatrick in her memoirs of an Australian childhood.<sup>244</sup> Fitzpatrick says: ‘When I’ve caught myself out adding or subtracting “facts”, I generally let the reader know, on the principle of disclosing information that may be used against me.’

*Ratio animalis* and *homo sapiens* possess the capacity to invent memory but, when invention comes into play, memory becomes imagination.

Insofar as *The Uncrowned King*, fictional elements were used to fill gaps, paint historical portraits and give personality to the characters inside my story, some of whom crossed paths with Horace Lindrum professionally. Others were drawn from my imagination. Thus the work springs from historical events, being the reality of my father’s life, imagination, memories, reminiscences and a rich world of experience, both inherited and lived. Some things retained their status of ‘myth’: I was unable to ascertain truth or fiction in them. When this happened I was inspired by author Paulo Coelho’s assertion that ‘some things [in life] can’t be grasped.....we have to respect and honour that mystery.’<sup>245</sup>

My father was an overwhelming presence in my life and my respect for him as a sporting champion, father and man were the underpinning ethics of my biography. I wanted his story to ignite public excitement in a moral tale

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<sup>243</sup> Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past*, 33

<sup>244</sup> Sheila Fitzpatrick, *My Father’s Daughter*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2012), 7.

<sup>245</sup> Paulo Coelho, *The Witch of Portobello*, (London: Harper Collins, 2nd edition, 2008), 336.

from which we might all learn something. I posit history has a major impact upon lives and an understanding of and relationship with the past is critical to laying the foundation stones for a healthy future. Certainly, Horace Lindrum's story speaks of the personal and the historical and his times were those of great political, social and personal upheaval. Because this is the case, I needed to document his history legitimately, not just in terms of upholding the dignity of his person, but also to capture the man and the nation in their shared time.

The task of writing *The Uncrowned King* was paradoxical. The key challenge being 'How to move from the empirical world to the world of imagination in order to tell the "Truth" of the story without violating literary instincts.'<sup>246</sup> Even after establishing the boundaries of personal experience, there was no way I could know for certain whether I could achieve the right balance between history and story. In the search for the right balance Ondaatje notes, 'You can only write it once'<sup>247</sup> and some readers may 'disapprove of the fictional air.'<sup>248</sup> But, the fictional air preserves the mystery of Horace Lindrum's life and times and, as Albert Einstein wrote: 'the most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science.'<sup>249</sup>

Author David Malouf has argued that history can play a limiting and destructive role and we should shift 'our attention away from the past and towards the future'<sup>250</sup> because only then can we become the nation we would like to be. If we were to adopt Malouf's philosophy, how might we write lives?

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<sup>246</sup> George Orwell, *Collected Essays*, (London: Mercury Books, 1961), 425.

<sup>247</sup> Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*, (New York, Canada, United Kingdom and Australia: Penguin Books, 1988), 201.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Hugh Mackay, *The Good Life: What makes a Life Worth Living*, (Sydney: Panmacmillan Australia Pty. Limited, 2013), 69.

<sup>250</sup> Susan Steggall, 'Introduction' to ISAA Review, Volume 10, Number 1, 2011, p. 2. Also Pamela Jerome, "An Intro to Authenticity in Presentation" *APT Bulletin*, Volume 39, No. 2/3, (2008), Association for Preservation of Technology (APT) International, 3-7.

Author and art historian Susan Steggall has countered, 'There is an increasing desire to maintain the rich legacy [of history] as a living presence in our lives.'<sup>251</sup> Whilst Steggall and Malouf may appear to be speaking in opposition to one another their concerns resonate with the dilemma biographers have always faced. Both acknowledge the role of history as a means of shaping national stories and, through national stories, national identity. How then might Horace Lindrum be located in Australia's national story?

A radical shift away from historical scholarship, ignorance of what Horace Lindrum achieved away from Australia, Lindrum's decision not to become embroiled in the politics of his sport which, in effect, led to a kind of shunning by future sports historians, are both personal and potential elements of Lindrum's history. Irrespective, the biography of the nation and Horace's personal biography are intertwined I assert, reflecting Emmanuel Levinas's belief that, 'To be properly human we need to have respect for and be responsible to the Other.'<sup>252</sup> This idea of the Other is particularly potent in the case of celebrities such as Horace Lindrum who lived a series of lives in the public as well as the private gaze.

Biographer Jacqueline Kent has said, 'Since we live in an age when a thousand cameras are pointed at every character from every angle, the biographer must be prepared to admit contradictory versions of the same face.'<sup>253</sup> Horace lived in an era of *Cinesound Movietone* newsreels, newspaper articles and photography where his sporting achievements were widely feted. He was many things to many people but, largely to me, he was my father. How then, in recognition of Kent's observation, might I reconcile the multifaceted private/public man?

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<sup>251</sup> Susan Steggall, 'Introduction' to ISAA Review, 2.

<sup>252</sup> Emmanuel Levinas, *The Levinas Reader*, edited by Sean Hand, (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 1993), 82.

<sup>253</sup> Jacqueline Kent, "Creating Lives: The Role of The State Library of New South Wales in the Creative Process of Biography", *Lassie* (August, 2002), Volume 4, No. 2, 87.

My dissertation attempts to find a historical pathway between what happened in my father's life, 'the reality' of his public persona, and the people who knew him best. Perhaps one of the lessons to be learned from Lindrum's life is that biographers need to take care not to confuse the 'transmitter of the symbol with the symbol itself,'<sup>254</sup> the symbol being a family story rather than the story of a single life. It is immersion in the life of the Other, the epoch and historical ephemera that encircles them, that gives the story of a single life a multi-dimensional substance and society learns far more from the multi-dimensional substance than from the subject in isolation. Insofar as the Lindrum family story, I assert that the family tensions that served to sever vital links in a chain of intimate relationships between family members were overridden by the billiards tradition across generations thus ensuring an enduring Lindrum family legacy.

In summary, something can be learned from a piece of a family puzzle but assumptions drawn from a single piece can often be proven to be wrong and incorrect assumptions infect history and lead to entrenched fictitious mythologies. A picture of family, especially one in which sporting excellence led to fraught relationships, becomes clearer when all the dots are joined.

In Part Two I examine the role of the biographer deconstructing, as I do so, the question posed by the English academic Hermione Lee who, citing Virginia Woolf asks: 'My God, how does one write a biography?'<sup>255</sup> I take this question further, asserting, from a position of ethical philosophy, that 'any practises of truth-seeking, claim making, or human expression, must include an

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<sup>254</sup> Coelho, *The Witch of Portobello*, 14.

<sup>255</sup> Hermione Lee, *Body Parts: Essays on Life Writing*, (London: Pimlico Publishing, 2008), 12.

awareness of the powers and limits that attach to different kinds of literary forms.’<sup>256</sup>

From the outset, the key question posed by my research was: How might a daughter walk from behind her father’s shadow to write the life of father, sporting champion and man, knowing and understanding before one even begins the task that ‘facts only speak when an historian calls on them [and] historians decide to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context.’<sup>257</sup> Thus, ‘the biographer’s view of [his/her] subject inevitably influences the results of [his/her] research,’<sup>258</sup> and impacts upon his/her close relationship to his/her subject. As Paulo Coelho suggests in his book *The Witch of Portobello* (2008), this is particularly difficult when one is shining the light on a much loved and respected father.

Finding an answer to this research question was not easy and, in the end, I elected to adopt the strategy suggested by Coelho: I abandoned the idea of writing a traditional biography and decided instead that *The Uncrowned King* would be a creative non-fiction work which drew on the literary devices of fiction, non-fiction, reportage and oral history to fully explore my father’s sporting life. Before making this decision I embarked on a quest for historical truth – a thorough researching of historical documents. Whilst these historical resources offered verisimilitude in many matters, it was during the research phase I realised fiction had a role to play in my biography – whilst there was certainty in some areas, in others there could only ever be speculation. Because I was born in 1950 I was party only to the latter part of my father’s life, a mere seventeen years of his fifty-year career. I don’t remember, for example, being photographed with the World Snooker Trophy in 1952 but I was an eyewitness

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<sup>256</sup> Berel Lang, “Writing and the Moral Self”, *The Anatomy of Philosophy Style* by Berel Lang, Review by Richard Eldridge, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Volume 51, No. 1, (Winter, 1993), Wiley on behalf of The American Society of Aesthetics, 79.

<sup>257</sup> Edward Hallett Carr (British historian) in Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 28.

<sup>258</sup> Coelho, *The Witch of Portobello*, 2.

to many events, a party to many family recollections, to newspaper scrapbooks, memorabilia, photographs, letters, diaries and newsreels (raw archival data), public documents in national and state archives and oral interviews. These research materials formed a complex mix of the man remembered and the man seen through the eyes of others.

My research conferred the knowledge that, as historical vessels, each of us carries within us a rich world of experience and, whilst 'Facts may be "necessary" to produce a proper history...facts do not determine an interpretation.'<sup>259</sup> The dissertation focuses on these contradictions through a review of the extensive theoretical literature on autobiographical constructions. These theories contest the value of objectivity in such projects, arguing that objectivity is either attainable or unattainable; that things exist objectively and independently or empirically, only to the extent that they are perceived. Coelho posits a return to the idea, 'Anything science cannot explain has no right to exist,'<sup>260</sup> but, equally, I have attempted to show the paradoxical relationship between fact (science) and fiction (art) to demonstrate how history and story work together and that the creative honours these historical research conventions. The paradoxical relationship between fact and fiction is why writing a life is such a delicate assignment, the biographer's aim being to 'sharpen, not blur, the distinction between truth and illusion, fact and fiction.'<sup>261</sup> But getting to the truth of a subject's personality is, as American historian David Hackett Fischer points out, 'no easy matter...for historical truths are never pure, and rarely simple.'<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Robert Berkhofer, *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1995), 56.

<sup>260</sup> Coelho, *The Witch of Portobello*, 5.

<sup>261</sup> Ray Monk, "This Fictitious Life: Virginia Woolf on Biography and Reality", *Philosophy and Literature*, Volume 31, No. 1, (April, 2007), Johns Hopkins University Press, 4.

<sup>262</sup> David Hackett Fischer (British historian) in Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 25.

My research tells two stories which are predicated upon the question: Who owns a history and who best to tell it? Paramount to finding an answer to this question is the important role of time and temporal shifts of perspective. The past is often truncated. As leading English scholar Ruth N. Halls argues, it contains 'two pasts, two orders of biographical event, the earlier time that is ostensibly the subject of autobiographical discourse and the time during which the autobiography is written.'<sup>263</sup>

Through the process of writing my father's story I sought to produce, not just the truth of my father's experience as a member in the sequence of my family but my own experience as a member of the same family as well as the interactions between family members, in order to search out what author Roy Pascal called, the 'truth of personality.'<sup>264</sup> According to Pascal, truth can be conveyed through the focus on a single life as the story of a single life connects with the history of that life; lives do not exist, survive or achieve in isolation. Thus, the reader comes to know Horace Lindrum and his world as well as the author of the Horace Lindrum story through intimacy and immersion in the respective worlds of subject and author. If we accept what Pascal says, a picture of life emerges where biographies are written precisely as story, that is, as an ordering of events around a central focus.

Whilst the biography attempts to portray Horace's life as our family lived it, it is in the dissertation that I take issue with the history that followed his death. I argue that since Horace's death in 1974 his successes have been alternately celebrated, discarded or ignored in Australia's sporting histories. The dissertation explores the cultural and political reasons for this particularly focusing on why the Horace Lindrum story is absent from the national story.

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<sup>263</sup> Paul John Eakin, "Henry James's "Obscure Hurt": Can Autobiography serve Biography?" *New Literary History*, Volume 19, No. 3, *History, Critics and Criticism: Some Inquiries*, (Spring, 1988), Johns Hopkins University Press, 676.

<sup>264</sup> Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography*, Massachusetts, (USA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 29.

In examining this, I focus on traditional and contemporary biographic forms as well as the different approaches to biography and different methodologies employed by historians, biographers and storytellers when writing lives. I was particularly interested in the authorial relationship between biographer and subject. What was the biographer's intention in engaging with their subject? What factors triggered the biographic impulse and what were the driving factors behind my own writing initiative? I posed a number of other questions relating to the history of biographical writing. Has the biographic form changed over time? If so, how, why and when did it change? What additional roles do historical facts play in the writing of other people's lives?

The dissertation is divided into four chapters. In Chapter One, I ask why anyone would write a biography. What impulse drives them? In an attempt to answer this question I explore a range of theories relating to writing the self, including those of Ricoeur, Levinas, Portelli, Berlin, Lacan, Serres, Sartre, Baudrillard, Barthes, Foucault, Levi, Ridley, Murdoch, Clendinnen, Atwood, Marshall, Craig and Arendt. I also examine a number of biographies, particularly those written by children of 'problematic' parents, including, Drusilla Modjeska's *Poppy* (1990), Susan Varga's *Heddy & Me* (2000), Shady Cosgrove's *She Played Elvis: A Pilgrimage to Graceland* (2011), Germaine Greer's *Daddy we Hardly knew You* (1989) and Jeanette Winterson's *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?* (2011).

In Chapter Two, I examine national stories, national silence in sport, the construction, invention, manufacture and evolution of national stories and the ways in which some national figures become part of the wider national story while others do not. I pose the question: How do silences happen and what does it mean for historical accuracy? Do we, to quote journalist Lenore Taylor,

‘ignore all the facts and just run with the bluster?’<sup>265</sup> Or are we, as sports historians Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz suggest, ‘biased and blind to what goes on around us?’<sup>266</sup>

In Chapter Three, I review the importance of sport in Australia and the evolution of the Australian sporting culture in which my father played a key role. I am particularly interested in the emotional bonds sport creates between people and nations and in Marxist structural theory which ‘conceptualises sport as an ideological state apparatus.’<sup>267</sup> I analyse the role of Australian sporting heroes and reflect upon where the Lindrum family fits within the context of the Australian national story.

In Chapter Four, I examine my reasons for writing *The Uncrowned King*. The biography or memoir is a family engagement with history. I am the eldest daughter taking up where my mother left off in attempting to tell the Lindrum family story in the full richness of its authenticity. In writing the biography I particularly wanted to come to a better understanding of how the private informs the public and how the personal defines, and is defined by, the national, but, even more potently, I wanted to celebrate an important life, and, in the process, correct any misrepresentations of my father, thus restoring the reputation of one of Australia’s most significant sporting pioneers.

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<sup>265</sup> Lenore Taylor, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, October 22-23, 2011, 17 and Ross Gittins in The Stories Writing History conference, National Library of Australia, ACT, 02-03 April, 2011 (NP).

<sup>266</sup> Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz, *One-Eyed: A View of Australian Sport*, (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 2000), 228.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid, 56.

In both components of the dissertation I argue that the Horace Lindrum story is far more than a family biography of the exceptional billiard playing Lindrums. It is a mirror before which a nation can examine itself. After all, history is that which tells us about ourselves, redefining, rethinking, reappraising our national stories as fluid things, open to revision and reclaiming.

In my biography I reclaim my father.

## Chapter One

### Subjectivity, Objectivity and the porous boundaries between fact and fiction

This chapter explores why writers are motivated to write a life and the authorial consequences of the biographic impulse. It examines whether the ways in which writers document lives has changed over time and, if so, why attitudes towards biography also have changed. The chapter compares traditional and contemporary views on writing biography, especially the ways in which an increasingly secular and industrial world has led to changes in language, perceptions of self and the subjects of biography.

While truth is an essential element of biography writing, the Australian academic and fiction writer Camilla Nelson has argued that there is a role for a fictionalised account of the biographer's subject. Nelson asserts that as well as offering a fictional element the spurious or fraudulent may tell us something of the author and his/her philosophy, motivation and intentions and, indeed, something of the world he or she inhabits.

Whilst Nelson's arguments contain points of interest to my research, especially ideas of the full meaning of biographical veracity, I would argue that there is no place for the bogus or counterfeit in biographical writing and this renders Nelson's hypothesis flawed. The only thing fabricated history tells us, I would assert, is that humans have a propensity to see things subjectively, being influenced by their view of the world at the time of reporting and, indeed, to be prejudiced in the expression of that view. Therefore, readers cannot assume that historical accounts are, in fact, true and factually correct. Whilst the role of an objective historian requires him/her to listen, interrogate, validate, verify, speculate and, when necessary, revise facts, those who rely on that historian's

work need to be able to verify the authenticity of the historian's account of events. For history to be history it must have veracity.

Writing about the role of the historian, the eminent oral historian and American Literature scholar Alessandro Portelli says, 'Respect for the value and importance of the individual is the most important thing and...[The] essential Art is the art of listening.'<sup>268</sup> Portelli believes that cultivating the art of listening is essential because it is from listening that we learn. When we fail to listen to the Other thinking is diminished and regress is the outcome, whereas when we hear the Other we are more likely to make informed decisions and less likely to make serious errors of judgment. Portelli also asserts that when it comes to interpretation, the duty is to the self and the 'duty to self needs to transcend all need for remuneration.'<sup>269</sup> When money is the driving factor behind the writing initiative the self is easily compromised, commandeered and corrupted.<sup>270</sup>

French philosopher Paul Ricoeur<sup>271</sup> proposed an ethics of responsibility predicated upon the art of listening to protect the biographical subject and overcome the difficulties and ambiguities in language.<sup>272</sup> Ricoeur's testing hypothesis was based upon three principles and can be summarised as follows: Firstly, to use our minds to the very best of our ability. Secondly, to execute all that reason counsels undistracted by passions or appetites. Thirdly, to recognise that one cannot control those things that are simply outside one's control as one has to live one's life according to Seneca's maxim: *Ad illius legem exemplumque formari sapientia est*. (To live in accord with my nature I must conform to the Laws of Nature and to the example of the nature of things.) This hypothesis serves to

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<sup>268</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia*, (USA: Wisconsin University Press, 1997), 58-61.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

<sup>270</sup> This corrosive process is observable in the Review of Significant Literature contained in the appendices to this dissertation.

<sup>271</sup> Paul Ricoeur was the recipient of the Balzan prize for Philosophy (1991).

<sup>272</sup> Paul Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action considered as a Text", *New Literary History*, Volume 5, No. 1, *What is Literature?* (Autumn, 1973), 91-117.

draw the distinction between reason and intelligence; 'reason' being man's instrument for arriving at the truth and 'intelligence' the faculty that enables man to use reason.

The German philosopher and author of *The Life of the Mind* (1978) Hannah Arendt suggested, however, that in the course of modernity<sup>273</sup> individuals have lost their traditional standards and values and *animal laborans* – 'the labouring animal' – has been victorious over *homo faber* – 'homo sapiens, the wise man'<sup>274</sup> – thus giving birth to a philosophy of greed. The philosopher and sociologist, Theodor Adorno, shared this view. Adorno believed reason had become an instrument to be used in the service of money and power.<sup>275</sup> Sociologist Erich Seligmann Fromm also shared this view. According to Fromm, 'Money, prestige, and power have become [man's] incentives and ends. He acts under the illusion that his actions benefit his self-interest though he actually serves everything else but the interests of his real self.'<sup>276</sup> In his book *The Winner Stands Alone* (2009), Coelho writes:

The Superclass rules the world; their arguments are subtle, their voices soft, their smiles discreet, but their decisions are final...They have the power. And power doesn't negotiate with anyone, only with itself.<sup>277</sup>

But Coelho offers the reader hope, concluding: 'all is not lost. 'In the world of fiction and in the real world, there is always a hero.'<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> An idea led by the Enlightenment project and fueled by philosopher, Immanuel Kant's rhetoric "Sapere Aude" – Have courage to use your own reason.

<sup>274</sup> Maurixio Passerin D'Entreves, *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, USA: Routledge, 1994, 3. References throughout the text.

<sup>275</sup> Andreas Molt, "Adorno and the Myth of Subjectivity", Sydney.edu.au/contretemps.3 July 2002/mot.pdf.

<sup>276</sup> Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, (New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 18th edition, 1966), 19.

<sup>277</sup> Paulo Coelho, *The Winner Stands Alone*, Australia: Harper Collins, 2nd edition, 2010, 70.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

The mythologist, Joseph Campbell offered a different view asserting that, 'for the democratic ideal of the self-determining individual, the invention of the power-driven machine, and the development of the scientific method of research has so transformed human life that the long inherited, timeless universe of symbols has collapsed.'<sup>279</sup> According to Campbell, the traditional family unit, for example, which was once rooted in an informal exchange of money and services has been subverted and a growing dependence upon labour and commodity markets has served 'symbolically' to give the impression of connectivity. In actuality, rather than being in communion with each other, we are rapidly becoming disconnected, alienated, isolated and self obsessed. Social scientist and author Hugh Mackay shares this view. Mackay asserts: 'the self we are increasingly being encouraged to indulge is a buffed-up, idealised self that doesn't always correspond to the person we know ourselves to be, or to the life we know we are really living.'<sup>280</sup>

If we accept Arendt, Adorno, Fromm, Coehlo, Campbell and Mackay, uncovering meaning, liberating ourselves from contradictions, inconsistencies and unreliabilities and reinstating tradition to its once hallowed pedestal brings with it the challenge of convincing the labouring animal to change his/her thinking. Transporting this thought into the realm of biography, I submit there is no value in illogical, incoherent and fatuous material nor place for willful fabrications. Ensuring our biographies are predicated upon the art of scholarship seems paramount to historical honesty, credibility and progress.

Scholarship, being that body of principles and practises that enables scholars to make their claims about their subject matter as valid and trustworthy as possible, recognises diversity of approach, the necessity of maintaining a high standard of performance and the value of the roles of

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<sup>279</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (California: New World Library, 3rd edition, 2008), 333.

<sup>280</sup> Hugh Mackay, *The Good Life: What Makes a Life Worth Living*, (Sydney: PanMacmillan Australia, 2013), 17 and 18.

subjectivity and objectivity. The tension between these philosophical concepts takes on special meaning when exported into the realm of biography because the argument over subjectivity and objectivity lies at the root of the contemporary dispute over the porous boundaries between fact and fiction. Throughout the course of this project, I have continued to acknowledge the inherent difficulties associated with 'subjectivity'.

The story of *The Uncrowned King* is personal to me; this is my family, my roots, my blood ties. Eliminating the subjective would mean eliminating self and story because self and story are inextricably linked. The history of relationships between individuals in the sequence of family; family dynamics, personality clashes, harmonies, tensions, conflicts and celebrations; are part and parcel of a complex moral and social identity. Our perspectives are forged by biological ties, genetic predisposition, inherited psychology and psychology developed through experience of membership in a family sequence and our beliefs and behavioural patterns signify how our particular family responds / responded to, creates / created and shapes / shaped change.

Adaptive family strategies create the unique environment that attaches to self development and the private and personal history experienced within that environment ultimately leads to a positive or negative fusion of identity or an identity that lies somewhere in-between the two poles. Thus, it is impossible to eliminate the subjective because subjective thought is part and parcel of our nature – we are born to think – and part and parcel of our identity – whereby we inherit the framework for our thinking. What we can do, however, is acknowledge that 'thinking' – subjective and objective – is fundamental to dialogue whether that dialogue be historical, philosophical, empirical or creative. If our 'thinking' is confused and / or conflicted, the risk of fundamental error is greater than it would otherwise be and, if logic is absent, the creation of false realities is inevitable. When false realities come into play, falsehoods are ingested as truth and nations and peoples are compromised.

Therefore, 'Stopping to reflect on the ethical implications [of what one says/ writes] is vital not only for the sake of personal excellence but for the sake of preserving long developed traditions founded on the principles of personal excellence.'<sup>281</sup> It is also important for us to continuously remind ourselves that 'the public has a right to Truth as well as a right to know how little authentic information there is in history.'<sup>282</sup>

Documenting the authentic version of a life story serves a dual purpose. It provides the reader with a verifiable account and serves to expose counterfeit versions.

Admittedly, it is possible to draw assumptions from a piece/ s of a family story about individuals in the family sequence or, indeed, the family as a whole – all objective truths – scientific or otherwise – are based upon assumptions – but a complete picture of family provides far greater enlightenment.

I posit an awareness of the complexities of self and subject's family life and lived experiences is paramount to rendering a genuine version of a subject's history and assert that, even when the subject is unrelated to the biographer, the biographer is influenced by these factors and bound by these principles in their role as 'protectors and patrons of their subject.'<sup>283</sup>

It is this close bond between a writer and their subject – in this case, between father and eldest daughter – that draws the reader into an evolving process of discovery between the worlds of biography, autobiography and memoir. In this space the faculty of the imagination plays a key role in ordering and shaping reader response.

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<sup>281</sup> David Craig, *The Ethics of the Story: Using Narrative Techniques Responsibly in Journalism* (USA: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 3.

<sup>282</sup> Johann Von Goethe, *Opinions*, translated by Otto Wenckstern, (London: John Parker & Son, 1853), 3.

<sup>283</sup> Barbara Caine, *Biography and History: Theory and History*, (Gordonville: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010). Manifesto for the important of the individual life story as a genre. This theme flows throughout the text.

According to memoirist Frank F. Mathias, the use of the imagination is the preserve of the memoirist: 'The only historian who may justly add to his story by use of the imagination to fill in a bit of the past is the memoirist.'<sup>284</sup> Mathias's hypothesis is rooted in the belief that the memoirist can pull from memory the unvarnished truth; memories of experiences, words, songs and so on and their interrelationship with their life. Examples of such memoirs are Australian author Albert Facey's *A Fortunate Life* (1981)<sup>285</sup> and Frank Hardy's *The Hard Way* (1960).<sup>286</sup>

Reviewed in a contemporary context these texts have currency but the main lesson we learn from Facey and Hardy is that nostalgia plays a powerful role in formulating history and artists must be free to use history because history is the story of the self and intimate stories of self and the self's relationship with the Other reveal the 'ceaseless interrelationship between public and private that register large and small events alike...This awareness involves a sense of shared experience, of being shaped by and participating in events larger than oneself.'<sup>287</sup> An example is the impact of the Lisbon Earthquake (1755) on Enlightenment thinkers.<sup>288</sup>

As the experience of history is a shared experience we need to be able to trust a biographer's 'honesty as a historian in telling his [her] story.'<sup>289</sup> Truth

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<sup>284</sup> Frank F. Mathias, "Writing a Memoir: The Investment of Art with Craft," *Society for History Education, The History Teacher*, Volume 19, No. 3, (May, 1986), 375.  
Frank Mathias was the author of *GI Jive: An Army Bandsman* (1982)

<sup>285</sup> Facey wrote his autobiography / memoir of rowing up in Western Australia, life as a bushman, professional boxer and soldier at Gallipoli and what it was like to lose a son to war, on exercise books on the kitchen table.

<sup>286</sup> Hardy extols his personal experiences of an overzealous judiciary, prosecution on a charge of criminal libel, imprisonment in the Melbourne Watch House, Trial in the Victorian Supreme Court and the Cold War.

<sup>287</sup> Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past*, 21.

<sup>288</sup> For example, Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, Rousseau, Immanuel Kant and Voltaire were all influenced by this event.

<sup>289</sup> Mathias, "Writing a Memoir: The Investment of Art with Craft", 375.

must remain whole and not diminished if truth is to remain an absolute. This is important because lessons are learned from the 'genuine' account which is why biographers should 'never tire of sleuthing after information, and, if called to interpretation [must] maintain a commitment to accuracy. Deliberate distortion is obviously unethical.'<sup>290</sup> In circumstances where a biographer is unsure of a fact/ facts, I assert he/ she is obliged to evoke the caveat emptor principle.<sup>291</sup>

Writing about the margins of biography, eminent academic Lisa J. Disch expressed concern that biography had become an increasingly contested genre, a view shared by Stout.<sup>292</sup> In traditional societies, for example, 'storytelling is a consensus-building practice that serves to hand down a common understanding of the meaning and purpose of human life.'<sup>293</sup> This used to be the case in contemporary Western society but I posit there have been sweeping changes to the way we 'think' and the way we use 'thinking'. The presumption that any knowledge is good seems fallacious because '[Thought] itself arises out of incidents of living experience [which is reality] and [as Arendt asserts] must remain bound to them as the only guideposts by which to take its bearings.'<sup>294</sup>

For Arendt, storytelling bridges the abyss between history and story but, if we are to accept Arendt's premise, then we must also accept biography, the writing of someone else's life, needs to be based upon 'terra firma facts'<sup>295</sup> as the purpose of writing the life is to shine a light on history. Yet we appear to have moved away from the traditional understanding of biography as 'concrete experienced reality' and into a different zone of creative history yet, as author

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<sup>290</sup> Jarvis P. Stout, "Writing on the Margins of Biography", *South Central Review*, Volume 23, No. 3, *Literary Biography*, (Fall, 2006), Johns Hopkins University Press, 64.

<sup>291</sup> Reader Beware, I may be an unreliable narrator. You need to do your own homework.

<sup>292</sup> Jarvis P. Stout, "Writing on the Margins of Biography", 64.

<sup>293</sup> Lisa J. Disch, 'More Truth than Fact: Storytelling as a Critical Understanding in the Writings of Hannah Arendt', *Political Theory*, Volume 21, No. 4, (Nov., 1993), Sage Publications Inc., 669.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid*, 665.

<sup>295</sup> Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 49.

Author Harry Knowles points out, 'biography is more than just a sort of sophisticated entertainment, [a] bedside companion after the daily torments in the laboratory or at the desk. Biography has the potential to extend the boundaries of many scholarly endeavours.'<sup>296</sup>

An interesting case in point is the debate over Australian author Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* (2005). In 2005 historian Mark McKenna accused Grenville of having elevated fiction to a position of interpretative power<sup>297</sup> and lamented that historians had lost much of "their earlier cultural authority". 'A cultural space has opened up into which writers of fiction are now more commonly seen as the most trustworthy purveyors of the past.'<sup>298</sup> A year later, author Inga Clendinnen weighed into the debate asserting in her essay, "The History Question: Who Owns the Past?" that academic historians were "in possession", presumably meaning: historians had reclaimed their cultural space; history being the preserve of historians. Clendinnen dismissed Grenville's novel as 'an inadequate representation of the past.'<sup>299</sup> Responding to the criticism, Grenville argued that the role of the novelist is to reflect on and draw inspiration from history by 'looking down at the fray' and forming a subjective view of what actually happened.

In responding to historians and novelists alike, I would like to contend that perceived differences in the way we tell stories lie in commonalities rather than in opposite viewpoints. Storytelling, after all, is part of our genetic history, 'we have deep narrative structures inside of us that enable us to relate our

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<sup>296</sup> Harry Knowles, "Voyeurs or scholars? Biography's role in Labor History", *Journal of Australian Studies*, Volume 25, Issue 69, 63. (pp. 63-75)

<sup>297</sup> 'If ever there was a case for a novelist wanting her work to be taken seriously as history, it is Grenville.'  
[www.kategrenville.com/node/75](http://www.kategrenville.com/node/75)

<sup>298</sup> Mark McKenna in Ashton and Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past*, 22.

<sup>299</sup> Ashton and Hamilton, 22.

experiences.<sup>300</sup> When we talk history, on the other hand, we are talking about the impact of an event in the past which has left an impression on us and an imprint on our brains. The event is over and, in that sense, it is no longer living experience but resides in the first-hand memory of those who experienced and / or remember the event / s or in the second-hand memory of those who are introduced to the event / s via stories handed down from one generation to another. Thus history “lives” through a series of generational lives – actual, remembered, recounted, reiterated. What is more, when a fiction writer writes history the mind of the fiction writer occupies a far different space from that a historian maintains when writing history. Justice lies at the heart of an historian’s commitment to service whereas igniting interest in the story of people, place, events, culture, traditions through fiction-making relies on an entirely different kind of storytelling enterprise.

Imagination, liberties with the inner lives of characters, anachronistic or modernised language can all play a role in a fiction writer’s fictionalised history whereas the historian stays true to the research before them or, at least, that is what the Von Rankean<sup>301</sup> tradition dictates. When it comes to writing lives, I posit the value to society of upholding the Von Rankean tradition. The ‘realisation that only smaller truths and narrower narratives are possible’<sup>302</sup> because historical facts ‘flow in response to specific questions posed by practitioners’<sup>303</sup> should not be used by practitioners as an excuse to do other than their best to offer up a genuine record of events. Notwithstanding, I agree with Australian historian Greg Denning when he says:

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<sup>300</sup> John Terrell, “Storytelling and Prehistory”, *Archaeological Method and Theory*, Volume 2, (1990), Springer, 2.

<sup>301</sup> Leopold Von Ranke (1795-1886) German Historian. Von Ranke’s principle ‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’ translated as ‘How things actually were’ is the historian’s guiding principle. Von Ranke’s first history was *History of the Latin and Teutonic Peoples 1495-1514* was written from a wide range of sources.

<sup>302</sup> Nancy Struna (Sport historian) in Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 41.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid, 36, attributed to British economic historian Michael Postan.

The past is not the exclusive property of historians.  
The past belongs to those on whom it impinges  
and they will represent it in many ways.  
They dance it. They sing it. They paint it. They play it.<sup>304</sup>

But representations of history should not be falsified so as to be instruments of harm.

Biographical writing is served by similar conundrums largely because 'definitions abound: from the mischievously disparaging (W. H. Auden's gossip writers and voyeurs calling themselves scholars) to the serious and scholarly.'<sup>305</sup> Vapereau defined biography as 'literary work, whose author intended, secretly or admittedly, to recount his/her life, to expose his/her thoughts or to describe his/her feelings.'<sup>306</sup> German philosopher Georg Misch on the other hand described the Art of Biography as 'concrete experienced reality.'<sup>307</sup> Author John Williams defines biography as 'the art of reduction...[a] craft of reducing the complex and contradictory into digestible portions.'<sup>308</sup> Scholars Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson agree, suggesting that perspectival adjustments define autobiography: 'historicity, genealogy, ideology and discursive imperative and Selfhood.'<sup>309</sup>

The Australian poet, critic and musician David McCooey expresses a different view, asserting that through autobiography 'a person's life' is

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<sup>304</sup> Greg Denning in Bruce Scates, "The Historical Conscience: Australian Historians on the Ethics of History by Stuart McIntyre", *Review by Bruce Scates*, *Labour History*, No. 90, (May, 2006), 233.

<sup>305</sup> Knowles, "Voyeurs or Scholars? Biography's role in Labor History", 63.

<sup>306</sup> Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, 'The Autobiographical Pact', edited by Paul John Eakin, translated by Katherine M. Leary, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis, 1989), 123.

<sup>307</sup> Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography*, 2.

<sup>308</sup> John Williams in Alex C. Castle's *Ned Kelly's Last Days: Setting the Record Straight on the Death of an Outlaw*, (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2005), 227.

<sup>309</sup> Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, editors, *De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1992), xvii.

notoriously difficult to define because it (autobiography / biography) is 'unfashionable historical discourse as distinct from fiction.'<sup>310</sup> McCooey seems to be suggesting it is fashionable to discount the past yet the legacy of the past offers more than a familial story: it forges our individual identity and defines the relationship we share with the subject of biography. It therefore deems our history shared, open to narrative and capable of definition. French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's deterministic vision offers an existence without memory, without identity, in which consciousness bubbles up discontinuously, from moment to moment, like gas.'<sup>311</sup> As Knowles observes, 'There is no consensus amongst biographers and historians on the question of what biography is or is not. Much depends upon the era when the biography was written and the method or technique employed.'<sup>312</sup>

The biographer's greatest challenge it seems, is to capture that which Sartre deemed unclaimable – memory's discontinuity. The biographer may address this by locating themselves quite visibly within the text. In historical writing the historian may stay well back, in the shadows, but biography often offers a more exhibitionistic impulse. The biographer's subjectivity is connected to their choice of subject – the two – subject and biographer – maintain a unique partnership, between self and Other (historian and storyteller on the one hand and subject on the other) and as such the biographer dances in and out of view. Hence the challenge associated with weaving history and story into a singular tapestry and the fragility of the biographer's role as historian and storyteller in rendering the history of a human person.

History and story may be disparate forms requiring vastly different skill sets, yet the blurring between the two is profound. Historians sit in the world of

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<sup>310</sup> David McCooey, *Artful Histories*, (United Kingdom, USA, Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>311</sup> Eakin, "Henry James's "Obscure Hurt": Can Autobiography Serve Biography?", 675.

<sup>312</sup> Knowles, "Voyeurs or Scholars? Biography's role in Labor History", 63.

*cogitare* which is at its best when the presentation of facts and evidence is such that one can be certain of something beyond reasonable doubt. Storytellers, on the other hand, are situated in 'a realm where images lurk in a shadowy mid-ground between the perceptions of full consciousness and the dark hinterland of the unconscious.'<sup>313</sup> History claims scientific status<sup>314</sup> yet history is also found in Simon Schama's approach – a history filled with characters and dramatic scenes – or the works of Raimond Gaita which are filled with philosophical reflections and insights.

Hence, by its nature, biography or 'life telling' encapsulates the language of laboratory and stage and many creative biographies have been constructed on a preponderance of characters plucked from the author's imagination to accompany the 'real' subject on their narrative journey. Because of this blend of historical truth and historical fiction, biography seems to rely on the same ethical, moral and legal challenges that attach to the arts of law, science, medicine and archaeology. Respect for personhood lies at the root of the art of biography just as respect for personhood lies at the root of all study founded on the principles of epistemology. To test this hypothesis, one simply has to pose the question: What is the role of the biographer?

If the answer to this question is: to record anthropological truth, then the biographer is bound by a duty to use their best endeavours to validate a life in the context in which that life was lived. To do otherwise, I would argue, is to risk harm to subject, family and wider national history. A further important consideration is that a nation's history is the sum of all its biographies. Therefore, history can only have merit if its biographies are reliable sources of information from which future generations can learn or draw inspiration.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> John H. Hartsook, "Becquer and the Creative Imagination", *Hispanic Review*, Volume 35, No. 3, (July, 1967), the University of Pennsylvania Press, 253.

<sup>314</sup> A rational and objective commitment to the quest for historical Truth.

<sup>315</sup> *The Memoires de la vie privee de Benjamin Franklin – The Memoirs of American President, Benjamin Franklin* (1793) – is a wonderful example of didactic memoir. In-text ref needed

British historian Keith Thomas argues, 'All historical writing is a form of literary composition, expressed through language, requiring artistry, conscious or unconscious, and embodying what cannot help being a selective and stylised view of the past.'<sup>316</sup> While Thomas argues for a 'selective and stylised view' this should not be read as a licence to lie, perpetuate a mistake rather than corroborate a truth and/or adopt a 'scissor and paste'<sup>317</sup> approach. Other contemporary views of biography include those expressed by military historian Richard Holmes who asserts that biography is a 'mongrel or maverick art, born of an unholy alliance the day that fiction married fact or invention formed a love-match with Truth.'<sup>318</sup>

The novel is often used as a yardstick for comparison with biographical works. Roland Barthes, for example, branded biography a novel 'that dare not speak its name'<sup>319</sup> thus locating biography in the realm of fiction. Barthes' theory is predicated upon the belief that the performative aspects of biography trigger a metaphysical transformation whereby author and subject become one and author sacrifices self – dies – in order to give life to the text. Once the text is written, all there is left is the text. Barthes' theory is refutable to writers. Rather than 'die' to give life to the text, the author lives through his/her role inside the text and the life of the text determines how an author is remembered.

Australian biographer Jacqueline Kent says biography is 'a strange form...no longer considered an art, not even the highest form of literature, the novel is still considered the gold standard of imaginative writing.'<sup>320</sup> Despite

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<sup>316</sup> Daniel J. O'Connor, "Biography as History and Abbot Salvado of New Norcia", Western Australia University, Crawley, 1995, 51.

<sup>317</sup> Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 215.

<sup>318</sup> Richard Holmes, *Biography: Inventing Truth: The Art of Literary Biography*, edited by John Batchelor, (United Kingdom: Clarendon Press, 1995), 16.

<sup>319</sup> Justin Kaplan, "Roland Barthes in 'A Culture of Biography'", *Yale Review* 82, October, 1994, 6.

<sup>320</sup> Kent, "Creating Lives: The Role of the State Library of New South Wales in the Creative Process of Biography", 86-87.

these views, for this author at least, biography is clearly not a novel. A novel is 'a set of strategies, closer to something in mathematics or quantum physics than something in ethics or sociology.'<sup>321</sup> It takes its reader on an imaginative journey, the writer/reader contract clearly defining the imaginative and made up within it. Yet the views expressed by Barthes, Holmes and Kent pose important questions about the ways in which language is used to shape biographical writing. I opine that descriptive and highly colourful language has subverted and has the potential to subvert the art of biography and strip it of its true purpose, which is didactic; to offer information and knowledge based on historical fact.

In concurring with Stout when he says: 'biography has become an increasingly contested genre,'<sup>322</sup> I contend the biographical subject has been over-theorised and this process, emanating from the reduction of knowledge to fermions, revision of moral codes and ethical frameworks, economic strife, personality differences and new ways of working which have created a desire to challenge the way we look at life, causes us to lose sight of the reality that, as author William Thayer argues, 'life is far deeper than the principles by which, at one period or another, we interpret it.'<sup>323</sup> Thayer asserts: 'There is a danger of becoming too cosmic, of seeing history from a height so remote that it bears no resemblance to the flesh and blood facts.'<sup>324</sup>

A further consideration is the process by which the biological person becomes an historical person through language, so we need to ensure that the ideals we set ourselves and the language we use are not dehumanising. For example, whilst it is reasonable to assert biography is neither pure art nor pure

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<sup>321</sup> Colm Toibin, *New Ways to Kill your Mother*, (Australia: Picador/PanMacmillan Australia, 2012), 8.

<sup>322</sup> Stout, "Writing on the Margins of Biography", 64.

<sup>323</sup> William Roscoe Thayer, "Biography", *The North American Review*, Volume 180, No. 579, (February, 1905), 262.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid*, 263.

science, is it rational for Holmes to use a word like ‘mongrel’ to describe a scholarly enterprise? What approach might young biographers take to biography if they are preconditioned to the idea that biography has no boundaries and no defining qualities and subjects are victims and writers are parasites?<sup>325</sup> These ideas are rejected in this dissertation. A biography is the story of a life and writing biography comes with an absolute duty to balance the concepts of objectivity and subjectivity in reporting the history of that life.

Writing on biography, Michel Foucault asserted, ‘Writing transforms the things seen or heard into tissue and blood (*in vires et in sanguinem*).’<sup>326</sup>

Australian author Francesca Rendle-Short also believes this is the case.

Rendle-Short says:

Writing is a means of coming into being (fashioning and re-fashioning the self); it makes skin and bones and blood – a body to breath. So alive are the words, the paper, the ink, it is very nearly impossible to imagine real flesh and blood.<sup>327</sup>

Whilst writing is a means of ‘coming into being/breathing life into a subject’, I posit these assertions suggest a trend towards draining the life out of the subject which, at best, is to create a fiction and, at worst, commit the offence of libel by willfully misrepresenting or causing harm to the subject.<sup>328</sup> The aim is to ensure the real flesh and blood person is depicted on the page so the reader is absorbed by the life and times of the subject.

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<sup>325</sup> Christopher Koch, “The Fate of the Individual lies in the Cross-Fire of History”, Stories Writing History conference, ACT: National Library of Australia, 2-3 April, 2011 (NP).

<sup>326</sup> Matthias Swonger, “Foucault and the Hupomnemata: Self writing as an Art of Life”, University of Rhode Island (2006), <http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/18>, 4.

<sup>327</sup> Francesca Rendle-Short, “The Smell of Pineapples: writing a Queensland auto-bio-graphie”, Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts, University of Wollongong, Text 10.2 (2006), 01/2006, 7.

<sup>328</sup> Defamation by written or printed words. [www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consolact/da200599](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consolact/da200599) Reference is also made to the Crimes Act – Section ‘Criminal Defamation’.

Foucault maintained, 'I's' are sites where generalised operations of power press ineluctably on the subject.'<sup>329</sup> Whilst I concur with Foucault, I would also assert that, when it comes to writing a life, the duty is to the Other not to the self. The biographical subject – more particularly the deceased biographical subject who is unable to defend himself/herself – must never be at the mercy of the biographer. If the self feels power over the subject it may be best to reconsider the project because the aim of biographer is not the exercise of power or judgment over the Other, rather the exercise of skill and artistry to understand a life in order to render an authentic account of it.

How then might one define the contemporary biography? The sports biographer Nicholas G. Richardson believes that, 'biographers have traditionally used a holistic approach that has attempted to paint in as much detail as possible of the subject's life and times. Within this broad spectrum three basic approaches have been identified.'<sup>330</sup> Richardson asserts that firstly, the realist approach allows for information to be collected and the biographer represents the viewpoint of the subject. Secondly he advocates the neo-positivist approach...where existing networks of concepts are used to make theoretically based predictions concerning people's experienced lives. Thirdly, the narrative is supreme whereby the biographer seeks to understand the subject's perspective as it is mediated by context.<sup>331</sup>

Aside from its storytelling elements, other defining features of biography can include allegiance to fact, 'to the past as it resides in memory over time and

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<sup>329</sup> Smith and Watson, *De/Colonising the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*, xiv.

<sup>330</sup> Author and Researcher, Robert L. Miller identifies and discusses these approaches in his book *Life Stories and Family Histories* (2000).

<sup>331</sup> Nicholas Richardson, "G. E. A. McDonald: The Rewards of Pragmatism: A Biographical Approach to Sports History", A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Melbourne: University of Melbourne, Melbourne: Department of History, 2004, 3.

to recoverable reality;<sup>332</sup> preservation of the image of man as 'an irrepressible teller of tales';<sup>333</sup> devotion to self-reinvention and its 'quest for referential Truth'<sup>334</sup> and reverential respect for memory.<sup>335</sup> But, above all else, perhaps the most distinguishing feature of biography is the one identified by Rendle-Short, 'trying to make sense of a history that has happened, a history that has disappeared down the cracks.'<sup>336</sup>

Important elements in history / story telling are the pattern or structure of the text and the identity of the narrator. The narrator and protagonist are, more often than not, one and the same although, in Franz Kafka's *Der Process*<sup>337</sup> Kafka is a third-party narrator sitting outside the story. Yet, there is commonality. In both instances the authors are the actors, producers and directors of the action and, at the heart of the biographic impulse is the 'I'. The 'I' is observable in *Poppy* (1990) where author Drusilla Modjeska reflects on the damage associated with living with the stigma of what she calls her mother's 'disorders of the brain' and in *Heddy & Me* (1994) where Hungarian Jewish author Susan Varga examines the role of survivors of the Holocaust through an intimate memoir of her mother, Heddy. Through reflecting on the lives of their mothers, Modjeska and Varga attempt to understand the circumstances and events that have forged their own identities and pose the question, what does it mean to be a casualty of history? The question is posed to the mother as well as the self.

Modjeska concludes we are all casualties of history. She asserts that, not only are we shaped by the events and the lasting images of specific events in

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<sup>332</sup> Eakin, "Henry James's "Obscure Hurt", Can Autobiography serve Biography?" 675.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid, 684.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid, 688.

<sup>335</sup> Kate Grenville, *Searching for the Secret River*, (Melbourne: Text Publishing Company, 2008), 213.

<sup>336</sup> Rendle-Short, "The Smell of Pineapples", 3.

<sup>337</sup> Unfinished manuscript 1914 – translated as 'The Trial'.

history and the knowledge that 'politicians love to shift responsibility onto the broad sweep of abstraction like progress or history, so that no one need take any blame,' but we also feel as if 'history marches on with a mind of its own and we'd better go with it or jump out of its way.'<sup>338</sup> Thus we are rendered powerless.

Varga concurs, arguing that we are casualties of history because we speak different languages and, even when we speak the same language, we have different ways of processing information. Frequently, meaning is lost because an individual's language is unique to that individual and, even when language is shared, what is said or written can still be misconstrued or misunderstood. The Other cannot hear what is being said, does not possess the same understanding or may not want to hear the message for fear of reprisals. Relaying her experiences of returning to her native Budapest, Varga says; '[The] formal official language used in the media and newspapers is hard for me to understand; it is full of words...self-important...power hungry.'<sup>339</sup> Varga suggests we need to examine the 'social difference and cultural gaps that seem to be so firmly entrenched in language'<sup>340</sup> and, instead of searching for difference, we need to search for common ground. Whilst supporting Modjeska's and Varga's, view, I would also argue that we are casualties of smaller events. History is purely a record of events and people write, re-write and re-interpret these events. Casualties of history are those people who are affected by the events of history and also when history is recorded or written wrongly.

Modjeska explains her theory of language by reference to her mother and step-father: 'Poppy's language was human and intuitive...

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<sup>338</sup> Drusilla Modjeska, *Poppy*, (Sydney: Penguin Books, 1990), 94.

<sup>339</sup> Susan Varga, *Heddy & Me*, (Abbotsford, Victoria: Bruce Simms Books, 1994), 244.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

Richard's language was the rule of law;<sup>341</sup> and then by reference to the great social scientists and social theorists – Marx, Darwin, Freud, Boas, Foucault – before concluding that language is 'the voice of dichotomy and split.'<sup>342</sup> After contemplating language, Modjeska and Varga reflect on how personal and public dramas unfold and play out alongside each other. Through this process they place important social issues under the microscope.<sup>343</sup> Life writers are drawn to an understanding of history, language, experience and social issues in their search for an understanding of the self or what Campbell calls 'the king within the Self, seated in the hearts of all creatures.'<sup>344</sup>

In discussing the biographical subject critic Daniel J. O'Connor asserts:

The biographical subject is a text-based creature whose habitat and activity is mostly circumscribed by the whims of its host, the biographer. The parasitic qualities of the host are such as to leave the subject with little of the substance of its original vigour. Instead the creature will have been remade to resemble the image, not perhaps of the host, but of something conducive to the life-style of the host.<sup>345</sup>

This contemporary critique reflects a resistance to traditional biographical values and the emergence of a pluralistic age of competing voices, opinions, perspectives and distorted effects that have served to destroy confidence in language and rupture the idea of truth. The Italian literary figure Albert Levi, for example, asserts truth is merely a Platonic ideal. 'Poetry, philosophy, history, a large part of the goods of life, are matters of richness and freedom of

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<sup>341</sup> Modjeska, *Poppy*, 100.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid, 212.

<sup>343</sup> God, religious scepticism, faith, family, culture, tradition, nationalism, politics, warmongering, religious and cultural difference, ethnicity, loss and displacement, rape, social disease, alcoholism, propaganda, cruelty, ignorance, mental health, torture, criminology, greed, male versus female psychology and the concepts of beauty, respect, dignity, friendship, work, play, memory and personality.

<sup>344</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 315.

<sup>345</sup> O'Connor, "Biography as History and Abbot Salvado of New Norcia", 51.

meanings rather than truth.<sup>346</sup> The inference here is that truth is malleable – ‘propositional’ – a mere statement of opinion – and any attempt to ‘elicit true propositions from novels, poems and drama is not simply difficult but misguided and irrelevant.’<sup>347</sup> Truth is nothing more than a manufactured commodity and literary works are written to entertain rather than demonstrate some higher Truth about the self and society.

Levi is more generous when it comes to his opinion on empirical science. ‘Science,’ he says ‘is concerned with truth and falsity of propositions...Science can have nothing to do with literature and metaphysics because literature and metaphysics are concerned with illusion rather than unvarnished truth. It represents ‘[An] appearance of reality rather than reality itself.’<sup>348</sup> I posit that ‘thinking’ is as crucial to the construction of a story as it is to the construction of a scientific hypothesis. You cannot extrapolate empirical methodology from art because ‘well-crafted story shares with the most elegant theories the ability to bring a version of the world to light that so it transforms the way people see that it seems never to have been otherwise.’<sup>349</sup>

In the context of this dissertation, biography needs to employ a series of levels or layers to capture the complexity of the subject, Horace Lindrum. These layers are a complex weaving together of fact and fiction which serve to validate film director David Attenborough’s assertion about the making of the film *Gandhi*. Attenborough believed:

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<sup>346</sup> Albert William Levi, “Literary Truth”, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Volume 24, No. 3, (Spring, 1966), Blackwell Publishing on behalf of The American Society for Aesthetics: 379.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

<sup>349</sup> Disch, “More Truth than Fact: Storytelling as a Critical Understanding in the Writings of Hannah Arendt”, 665.

[No] man's life can be encompassed in one telling.  
There is no way to give each year its allocated  
weight, to include each event, each person who  
helped to shape a lifetime. What can be done is to  
be faithful in spirit to the record and try to find  
one's way to the heart of the man.<sup>350</sup>

When it comes to biographical role models, the scholar Ronald Ridley<sup>351</sup> suggests historian Manning Clark 'made much of a quality which is fundamental to the biographer – "The eye of pity."' <sup>352</sup> I would take this view further, asserting that the fundamental is 'the eye of the master craftsman' who never sacrifices truth on the altar of expediency. On the contrary they pay attention to detail and, with a skilled eye, look to all the angles before putting pen to paper. Writing about her work on the Spanish Inquisition, author Inga Clendinnen argues the importance of ethical and moral frameworks:

...had I inserted one false detail, one imputation of motive or sensation not justifiable out of the record (including its exclusions, deformations and silences) I would have falsified an actual human and, therefore, a moral relationship between myself and the people I had chosen to represent and between myself and my potential readers who look to me for History.<sup>353</sup>

But what of the gaps and silences? Canadian author Margaret Atwood says: 'In the parts left unexplained, the gaps left unfilled, authors are free to invent with the proviso that any invention serves to preserve the spirit/authenticity of the

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<sup>350</sup> Richard Attenborough's biographical film *Gandhi*, Columbia Pictures in association with Gold Crest Films and National Film Development Corporation of India and Indo-British Films, starring Ben Kingsley (1982).

<sup>351</sup> Professor Emeritus at the School of Historical Studies, University of Melbourne.

<sup>352</sup> Ronald, T. Ridley, "What an Historian Knows", Valedictory Lecture, the Elisabeth Murdoch Theatre, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2007, School of Historical Studies, (Melbourne: the University of Melbourne Press, 2008), 27.

<sup>353</sup> Clendinnen in Nelson, "Faking it: History and Creative Writing", 3.

story.’<sup>354</sup> In the context of this dissertation what Clendinnen and Atwood have to say is important to answering another key question: What role does authorial intention play in writing biography?

When applied to biography this question harks back to that posed by Arendt in relation to evil. If a biographer comes to the task with malice, what is the reason for a rational being surrendering his/her capacity to logic? Is it as David Craig has said, simply a case of ‘stopping to reflect on the ethical implications...not only for the sake of personal excellence but for the sake of preserving long developed traditions founded on the principles of personal excellence.’<sup>355</sup> In the answer to this question rests a range of views on ethics, biography and responsibility which will be explored in the following chapters.

In this chapter I have explored the importance of principles in the writing of traditional biography. In terms of biographical developments I have shown just how widely these traditional views have been challenged. I have argued that whilst there will always be abstractions and innovations in biographical developments there should never be fabrications. Fabrication and fiction, I assert, is the role of the novelist. In the chapter that follows I examine biography through the prism of the national story. Nations weave their own fictions, I argue, not too far removed from those of personal fabrication.

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<sup>354</sup> Atwood in Nelson in “Faking it: History and Creative Writing”, 1.

<sup>355</sup> David Craig, *The Ethics of the Story: Using Narrative Techniques Responsibly in Journalism*, USA: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 3.

## Chapter Two

### National Stories

In this chapter I consider the role biography plays in formulating the national story by viewing the national story through the prism of my father's life and vice versa. Of particular interest in this chapter is why the life of one of Australia's most significant sporting pioneers has not received the recognition it deserves and why, post 1974, there have been attempts to damage his good name and reputation. Reference here is made to the Review of Significant Literature interwoven into the arguments of chapter four.

I grew up with the belief my father was a great champion so I was surprised to find important sporting histories conspicuously silent on his achievements. It was also a shock to find my father's life of achievement disfigured in many contemporary texts. Thus, a core aim of this dissertation was to set the record straight by charting a course through the biography of the nation to get to the genesis of this shift in thinking – from 'Boy Wonder' in 1928 to 'Maestro' and 'King of the Cue' in 1974 – to today's lost, forgotten and subverted hero.

Because the Lindrum family story is largely a sporting story, I focus on the concept of the sporting hero, cultural shifts in sport and the evolution of the new sporting model in Chapter Three, The Sporting Hero.

Research into elite sporting families over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reveals the Lindrums are the only family in the history of the sport of billiards and snooker to have produced five world-class sporting champions in the same discipline in only four generations. In the context of this rich history it is all the more surprising that the last member of the Lindrum sporting

aristocracy should have been excluded or under-represented in the history books, especially given he was the last link in a chain that connected the whole. The overwhelming silence from 1974 to the present day might, as Booth suggests, say something about the 'unfashionable status of billiards and snooker among professional historians of sport, at least relative to more physically exertive, and corporeal, sports and pastimes that have achieved popularity in Australia.'<sup>356</sup> It might also say something about capitalist structures which drive the rabid consumption of stories and continuous hunger for the new. These structures are designed to produce heroes of the moment to elevate the status of the nation and drive nationalist fervour. Whatever the case, I agree with Booth. The subject warrants closer analysis.

One of the aims of this work has been to trigger the interest of historians, however, closer analysis will be expensive, in terms of time, money and resources, and, from a political perspective, it may be fraught with difficulty as it will require the researcher to uncover the underbelly of sport and expose the complex network of business interests underneath. Publication then becomes a challenge. Such was the case with Frank Hardy's *Power without Glory* (1950). Hardy's critique on the three arms of government<sup>357</sup>, gambling men and big business interests saw him charged with criminal libel, imprisoned, subjected to a very public trial in the Supreme Court before eventually being exonerated.

Dubbed 'The Showman', 'The Peter Pan of Snooker', 'The Ace' and 'Tokoloshe'<sup>358</sup> for his ability to entertain an audience, Horace Lindrum was Australian professional billiards and snooker champion for over thirty-three

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<sup>356</sup> Douglas Booth, Examiner's Report, *The Uncrowned King*, 5.

<sup>357</sup> Parliament, Judiciary, Police Force.

<sup>358</sup> Zulu mythology. A dwarf-like sprite/witch doctor/magician. Horace Lindrum was only 162.56 centimetres in height (5 feet 4 inches) – size 6 shoe. African fans could not understand how he executed the famous "Basket shot" in which the cue ball took flight into the neck of a basket with an opening no bigger than the circumference of the ball. Lindrum then re-executed the shot, putting another cue ball into the basket and forcing the cue ball inside the basket to come out. Hence they nicknamed him 'Tokoloshe/Magician'. (Tikoloshe in Xhosa)

years and a world professional snooker champion. The first player in history to record world record snooker breaks of 114, 116, 135, 139, 141 and 144 and the first player to 'officially record' a snooker century in India<sup>359</sup>, Lindrum was also first to put cue sports on television in an experimental series at the Alexandra Palace in London on April 14, 1937 with British idol and veteran champion Willie Smith of Darlington.

Recording the highest possible break at snooker of 147 at the Penrith School of Arts in 1941, Lindrum went on to become the first snooker player to record one thousand snooker centuries in public performance<sup>360</sup> and, to date, he is the only snooker player to have held the British, Irish, Scottish, South African, Basutoland, Maltese, Chinese, Indian, Malay, Singaporean, New Zealand and Australian snooker records simultaneously. Lindrum's records in billiards are equally impressive.

In the search for an explanation for the gaps, errors, omissions, distortions and conspicuous silences relating to Horace Lindrum's record of achievement it has been necessary to examine the evolution of organised sport and to survey significant changes in the culture of sport from the time of Lindrum's debut at the billiard table in 1928 to his swan song in 1974. The aim here is to determine what impact these changes have had on how the Lindrum family story is reflected in the Australian national story.

I turn now to consider what is meant by the term 'national story'. Some critics consider the Australian national story to be one of epic achievement. Others view it as the story of competing narratives. These opposing perspectives give rise to important questions. Is the national story the product of a well-funded, long-term, meticulous and methodical historical and storytelling process? Might it be a competition between peoples and nations,

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<sup>359</sup> A snooker break of 115 recorded at the W.I.A.A. Club in Bombay, now Mumbai. A magnificent antique trophy commemorates the event.

<sup>360</sup> Many of these centuries were reportedly recorded in a world record time of 2 1/2 to 6 minutes.

socially engineered and designed by a dominant 'power' elite? Is the national story a great resource – an historical, political, sociological, cultural and philosophical storehouse – which helps us to live well, manage our society justly, raise and educate our children, instill respect, encourage public courtesy, uphold the dignity of personhood, preserve the principles of democracy, maintain legal frameworks and lift the intellectual bar?

In an attempt to answer these questions, I propose firstly to consider what we mean when we talk about the 'nation'. Scholar Anthony Smith defines the nation as 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.'<sup>361</sup> This definition is encapsulated in the meaning of the word 'nation' which is derived from the Latin word 'natio' meaning a large group of people, a community or a tribe, who feel 'they belong together by virtue of sharing one or more such traits as common language, religion or race, history, culture, common history or tradition, common set of customs and common destiny.'<sup>362</sup>

Philosopher and social anthropologist Ernest Gellner defines 'the state', as opposed to the nation, as: 'that institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with the enforcement of order.'<sup>363</sup> There is a duality at the heart of the modern nation state. On the one hand national / international political borders operating within legal frameworks, on the other, the ethnic, spiritual, cultural, biological, genealogical, linguistic factors defined by ancestry, migration, immigration, language, customs and traditions. Campbell calls the secular state 'a hard, unremitting space where competition for material

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<sup>361</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (USA: University of Nevada Press, USA, 1991), 43.

<sup>362</sup> Mostafa Rejai and Cynthia H. Enloe, "Nation-States and State-Nations", *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 13, No. 2, (June, 1969), 141.

<sup>363</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (USA: Cornell University Press, USA, 1983), 4.

supremacy is fierce. Isolated societies, dream-bounded within a mythologically charged horizon, no longer exist except as areas to be exploited.<sup>364</sup> Campbell's hypothesis is shared by author Richard Florida who asserts that the world economy in the future is likely to be shaped 'around an even smaller number of mega regions and specialised centres while a much larger number of places will see their fates worsen as they find themselves struggling to stay in the game.'<sup>365</sup> If we accept the hypotheses propounded by Campbell and Florida, we accept industrialised nations are the puppets of industry and non-industrialised nations at risk of predatory strategies.

The concept of 'nationalism', that is attachment to the nation, is said to have created the imaginary bond that exists between a nation and its people. This imaginary bond, which might be compared to the bond between a mother and her child, stretches across nations 'whereby a group of people hold in their minds a mental image of affinity with one another.'<sup>366</sup> The strength of the bond is articulated in the 'crimson thread of kinship'<sup>367</sup> that sees young men and women prepared to sacrifice their lives for the nation which, as Australian writer Peter FitzSimons says, is 'wrapped up in the notion of nationhood.'<sup>368</sup> Aside from rites, rituals, stories, customs and traditions, also wrapped up in the notion of nationhood are feelings of pride, love, sorrow, compassion, guilt and shame.

Citizenship is a further 'important factor in shaping commitment to the social institutions of the nation and bonds are strengthened by continual

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<sup>364</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 334.

<sup>365</sup> Richard Florida, *Who's Your City?* Basic Books (New York: Perseus Books Group, 2008), 75.

<sup>366</sup> Jack Straw, "The Way we Are", *The World Today*, Volume 63, No. 5 (May, 2007), 16. The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, 14-16.

<sup>367</sup> Words attributed to Sir Henry Parkes, the Father of Federation.

<sup>368</sup> Peter FitzSimons, "World War I Anniversary" in the *Sun-Herald Extra*, Sunday August 03, 2014, 31.

exposure to the idea of nationalism.<sup>369</sup> Marketing the nation serves to further bind nationals and to encourage new peoples to forgo their loyalty to one nation and pledge their allegiance to becoming an integral part of the mainstream of another.<sup>370</sup> Many propound the concept of one world and champion the collapse of the nation state in favour of a more peaceable and co-operative world system but, according to Smith, the nation state 'shows no sign yet of disappearing into the dustbin of history.'<sup>371</sup>

Yet the nation state is disintegrating and the concept of nationhood is being eroded by religion, big business, professional tribes and social media. Sport plays a major role in this process. Viewed through the lens of events like the Olympic Games and the Football World Cup and 'images of personages draped in flags ...which project the new national 'idea' of the hero'<sup>372</sup> nationalistic sentiment appears ripe. But is this a distortion? People representing the 'nation' now earn their incomes in international arenas in many countries not their own and nations have a vested interest in the promotion of sport as inextricably linked to big business and big business revenues. Therefore, national allegiances are to a greater or lesser extent compromised by what constitutes the national and what plays out as the global.

According to cultural historian Thomas Bender, the biography of a nation and its peoples is partially shaped by past and present happenings and events that occur beyond their borders. Therefore, rather than continue to nurture an exclusive notion of citizenship, we should view nations as members of a family of nations because all nations, except the most extremely isolationist are

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<sup>369</sup> Timothy L. Phillips, "Symbolic Boundaries and National Identity in Australia", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Volume 47, No. 1 (Mar., 1996), Wiley on behalf of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 117.

<sup>370</sup> My great-great-grandfather, Friedrich Wilhelm Von Lindrum, surrendered his loyalty to his homeland of Prussia and pledged his allegiance to Australia in 1861.

<sup>371</sup> F. L. Jones and Philip Smith, "Individual and Societal Bases of National Identity: A Comparative Multi-level analysis", *European Sociological Review*, (June, 2001), 104.

<sup>372</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 335.

influenced by the world around them in the same way individuals in a sequence of family are impacted upon by members within the family group.<sup>373</sup>

In the context of this argument each member of the Lindrum family was dependent upon the other to learn their craft, challenge the other and create the collective energy needed to put the Lindrum name into Australian households, initially across the country and, later, across the globe. More generally speaking, all of us can 'identify within ourselves feelings, interests and beliefs that were shaped by family members who were close to us when we were children'<sup>374</sup> and, as Campbell says, 'From the umbilical cord the hero departs to realise his destiny.'<sup>375</sup> One of the many questions this dissertation poses is, how to ensure the survival of the story of that hero.

For a family story to survive for any length of time, family members need to fight for that story's survival because the national consciousness consumes information at an ever increasing pace, is infected by what it consumes and, post consumption, nationally 'forgets'. Thus, one rendering of a story is insufficient for the story to propagate. The story needs to be well-championed before it is absorbed into history and, even when it has an historical home, how long it stays there will be dependent upon how well it was championed, whether it continues to be championed or whether distortions take over, or it fades from the national narrative.

The decision as to what part of a story is incorporated in the national story rests, to a great extent, with the orchestrators, the dominant group/s within the operating culture who seek to propound an official history. This history ensures 'an individual's relationship to society as a member of either a dominant or a minority group, and, by acculturation, [locating] him/her within

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<sup>373</sup> Thomas Bender, "Putting the United States in its Place, A Nation among Nations: America's place in World History", *Reviews in American History*, Volume 34, No. 4, December 2006, Johns Hopkins Press, 576.

<sup>374</sup> David Cheal, *Sociology of Family Life*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 2.

<sup>375</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 289.

the historical narrative of that particular group in the same way genealogy confirms a person's place in the continuum of the family history.<sup>376</sup> My family story used to sit in a mainstream space but now has been relegated to the margins. There are many possible reasons for this and I will consider all the possibilities in Chapter Three.

The billiard room was the Lindrums' temple. They sacrificed their childhoods to long hours of practice. In *Saturday Afternoon Fever* (1986) author Brian Stoddart writes:

By the advent of World War I...sports like billiards and snooker had already produced the first in a string of world-class professionals. The Lindrum family, notably brothers Fred and Walter followed by nephew Horace, showed how sports prowess could be turned to economic advantage.<sup>377</sup>

I agree with Stoddart but he omits an important fact about the Lindrums; that is they used their talent with a cue to entertain people across the world and raise money for the needy. Philanthropy was integral to the Lindrum's philosophy of sport as was representing their country and chosen sport with dignity.

In chapter five of his text, Stoddart makes the following statement:

The professionals invariably were drawn from the lower end of the social scale. Their origins and the venues of their early training frequently caused the sport to be labelled as socially unrespectable, often to the point of criminality, by their social superiors. The dominant attitude was summed up in the popular saying that expertise at billiards and snooker was the sign of a misspent youth.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Greg Ratcliffe, "Archives and Anecdotes: History and Auto/biography in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*", *New Literature Review*, No. 26, (Winter, 1993), 19.

<sup>377</sup> Brian Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever: Sport in the Australian Culture*, (North Ryde and United Kingdom: Angus & Robertson, 1986), 23.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid*, 122.

Stoddart cites no evidence in support of these assertions nor any history of the Golden Age which paints an entirely different picture of the sports so it would be very easy for a reader to form a jaundiced view. Negative attitudes and narrow perspectives create or serve to perpetuate prejudice.

In actuality, during the Golden Age professionals were drawn from all classes of society and those who reached the pinnacle were hailed as great virtuosos. The allegation that the sport was labelled 'unrespectable' by its 'social superiors' is refuted as conjecture. I am unable to deny the schizophrenic nature of the cue sports – the sports of palaces and pool halls – I am also unable to deny the reality that the world is populated by all sorts of people.

The statement, 'billiards is a sign of a misspent youth' raised Lindrum shackles yet this idea of squandered / wasted youth and unfulfilled potential highlights the controversies that shroud many fields of human enterprise where the lines of demarcation have been blurred and the enterprise prostituted to profiteering. Interestingly, artist Vincent Van Gogh critiqued the idea of 'wasted youth' – the idle and addled mind – in his painting *Le Cafe de nuit* (Arles, 1888). (Situate in a French cafe, a carom table sits at the heart surrounded by sleeping hooligans / drunkards slumped across dining tables. The potential to engage in strategic thinking is readily available to these people but the carom table is not in use. In the mind of the viewer the environ is unsavoury and the cue sports implicated by association. Substitute the carom table for an upright piano and the same murky impression might also be formed).

I have repeatedly asked myself the question: How did the mathematical and scientific sports of billiards and snooker – sports with rich histories that can be traced back to the Egyptian Pharaohs and the poetry of Omar Khayyam – that require hours of practise to reach the Inner Temple – become associated with the idea of wasted youth? I don't know the answer to this question and maybe there isn't one.

What I do know is that billiard rooms were frequented by the unemployed during the Great Depression (1929-late 1930's) much as art studios in the back tenements of apartment buildings in Paris were occupied by penniless artists like Vincent Van Gogh during the late nineteenth century so it is feasible that the 'misspent youth' label was affixed to the cue sports during the Depression years much as it had been affixed to penniless artists – who were perceived to be misspending their youth – in the nineteenth century. The difference seems to be that 'the label stuck'. The question is why? One possibility is an association with capitalist gamblers – men deeply connected with the social and economic upheavals arising out of the industrialisation of the modern world (1848), described by E. White as 'a set of men who infested the places of public resort.'<sup>379</sup> These men preyed on the intellectually inept and disadvantaged in hard times. Progressively, this association tarnished the sports whilst successive coup d'états in the elite ranks eroded the plating that once served as a barrier to the corrosive process. In more recent times this tarnish has spread like a virus, permeating, infecting and corrupting other sports and the predatory and pervasive nature of the gambling industry is now pervading the living room through sport and advertising.

Returning to the concept of 'national stories', whilst national stories should be an honest reflection of the history of a nation and its people, national stories – of which Stoddart's history of sport in the Australian Culture is one – are made up of biographies. Biographies, like all other forms of human enterprise, are vulnerable to manipulation because the act of storytelling is self-reflexive. The 'I' is at the centre of the perception and becomes one with the perceived. If the 'I' holds to strong belief systems – whether they be right or wrong – there is a strong likelihood that the impression/s formed in the 'I's' mind will be relayed to the reader in some shape. If the "I" harbors prejudice there is a strong likelihood that the stigma attached to that prejudice will

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<sup>379</sup> E. White, *A Practical Treatise on the Game of Billiards*, (London: W. Miller, 1907), 2.

spread, more particularly if the 'T's' name and reputation is such that what he/she says is held in high regard by the general public.

The 'T's' interest in a subject may also be purely financial and a work crafted for an audience with a particular appetite. The recent flood of political and sporting memoirs are a good example of this and a good example of how sport and the sport of politics function as an ideology to preserve and perpetuate capitalist structures.

The ANZAC legend is a prime example of 'a rear-guard action to defend Australia's sacred national symbols and boundaries'<sup>380</sup> before they disappear. So, too, is Lieutenant Colonel Peter McGuinness's Official History *Boldly and Faithfully: The Journal* (2011) which chronicles the long overdue history of the 19th Infantry Battalion (AIF). Whilst escorting travellers around the battlefields of the Somme on the 'Our Other Anzac Tour' of 2008, McGuinness was challenged by one of the pilgrims. When McGuinness pointed out while the achievements of 17th and 21st Battalion were well-known, little was known of what the 19th Battalion had achieved, the pilgrim said to him, 'If it is so important an issue to raise then [you] should get off [your] backside and write it.'<sup>381</sup> Writing *The Uncrowned King* might also be perceived as a rear-guard action to restore and preserve a unique piece of Australian history before time runs out.

Marrying the history of a people with the man or woman whose everyday life was shaped by the experience of events serves a great purpose as the patterns that emerge raise interesting sociological questions. As anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Levi-Strauss noted: a single life may be rich with vivid and absorbing detail but it acquires historical meaning and

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<sup>380</sup> Phillips, "Symbolic Boundaries and National Identity in Australia", 128.

<sup>381</sup> Peter Edward Morris McGuinness, *Boldly and Faithfully: The Journal: The Official History of the 19th Australian Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, March 1915-October, 1918*, (1/19 RNSWR Association, Inc incorporating 2/19 Australian Infantry Battalion, A.I.F. Association, Tasmania, 2011), viii and ix.

importance when it is folded into a narrative stronger than itself...it makes strong history stronger.<sup>382</sup> Historian Mott T. Greene demonstrates the strength of Levi-Strauss's argument by comparing Gordon Craig's *Germany 1866-1945*<sup>383</sup> with John Peter Netti's *Rosa Luxemburg* (1966), a text which deals with the every day life of revolutionary socialist Rosa Luxemburg in the context of the history of her times:

We stop rushing from month to month and year to year and move inside hours and days. Once there, we have leisure to be reminded that in the middle of great events like the outbreak of World War I, important thinkers and political actors also went on vacation, wrote love letters, and fired their cooks.<sup>384</sup>

*The Uncrowned King* has been written to enable readers to immerse themselves in Lindrum's world so as to understand what it was like to grow up as an only child in a one-parent household in an era when sole parenthood was viewed in a dim light. To sit on the sidelines watching the emerging entertainment scene, to be transported to a house of billiard champions whilst one's mother was imprisoned and subjected to a very public bigamy trial and to later travel from country town to country behind Bill South's circus and journey around the world taking the sport of snooker to places where it had never been seen before.

A key question inherent in my text is what impact events, inside and outside the household, had on the life of the subject and on others who crossed pathways with him on his journey. An important factor here is that Horace Lindrum's international career was interrupted by war when he was at his peak. Returning to Australia, he joined the Australian Military Forces as a Sapper on March 31, 1942 (Army Number N181304) and was transferred to the

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<sup>382</sup> Mott T. Greene, "Writing Scientific Biography", *Journal of the History of Biology*, Volume 40, No. 4 (Dec., 2007), Springer, 728-729.

<sup>383</sup> A history of the rise and fall of a united Germany.

<sup>384</sup> Greene, 'Writing Scientific Biography', 729.

Royal Australian Engineers based in Tamworth on April 6. Again, as Campbell argues, the hero's journey can be interrupted by circumstances beyond his/her control.

*A Queenslander's Travel Notes* published in 1905 by Australian editor, author and literary critic Alfred Stephens<sup>385</sup> is an example of another kind of heroic adventure. This series of syndicated articles provided the nation with perceptions of the world in 1905, added to the collective knowledge of the nation at that time, served as a stimulus for further enquiry into the culture, traditions, language and behavioural patterns of nations and peoples beyond our boundaries and resulted in a further widening of the national consciousness. During his lifetime, the subject of my dissertation wrote books, articles and diagrams. His wife, my mother, Joy Lindrum<sup>386</sup> also wrote articles, maintained records and compiled a book of anecdotes. *The Uncrowned King* was developed from Horace Lindrum's record of his experience as an Australian sportsman and member of a sporting dynasty and from his wife's perceptions of living life as a Lindrum. Stories such as Horace Lindrum's speak of a nation's need for stories and the need to prize the art of preservation.

As Fullbright scholar and author, Edward J. Blakely says:

Nations need stories – fictions for being. Nations like the United States craft compelling narratives – little of it based on concrete fact but thrilling to know and compelling to read. On the other hand, Australia has no story. The fact a few criminals, indentured servants went to a far land – just ain't a very interesting story. So while the US story via movies

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<sup>385</sup> Alfred Stephens was the Editor of two country newspapers, *The Gympie Miner* (1888-1890) and *The Cairns Argus* (1891-1892) and author of leaders for Gresley Lukin's *Brisbane Boomerang* (1891)

<sup>386</sup> Horace Lindrum's wife of 24 years.

and pulp fiction mesmerises the world, Australia is a cute kangaroo surrounded by assorted drunks and dangerous animals...<sup>387</sup>

Blakely's words are inflammatory but are they true? White Australians might agree that our colonial national story does not present a compelling narrative. One of the reasons for that is the perception of Australia as a young country and the belief that, as the Australian nation matures and its young culture melds with older immigrant cultures, the Australian story will become more interesting and more inclusive. From an Indigenous perspective, however, Australia possesses one of the most interesting ancient histories on earth. According to its indigenous owners Country is a being with a soul and the indigenous story of the nation has been irreparably damaged by colonial intervention. The Australian national story is thus rooted in competing narratives.

Benedict Anderson has said 'it is the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny.'<sup>388</sup> I opine, when a nation is rooted in diametrically opposed philosophies, turning chance into destiny will be challenging. Reconciling our binary history will require a dedicated commitment to reconciliation whereby the national consciousness metaphysically places itself in the shoes of the Other in order to feel the Other's pain. Reconciliation flows from comprehending the extent of the damage that colonial land appropriation inflicted upon the indigenous nation. Australia's competing narratives arise out of the mistakes of the past. In speaking of past mistakes Bernard Williams argues that the 'responsibility for a bad state of affairs can only be incurred by someone who

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<sup>387</sup> Professor Edward Blakely – Fullbright Scholar, Honorary Professor of Urban Policy at US Studies Centre, one of the world's leading scholars and practitioners on urban policy and author of a number of books including *My Storm: Managing the Recovery of New Orleans in the Wake of Katrina*, with Foreword by Henry Cisneros, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. Critique on Janne Lindrum's draft PhD proposal, July 10, 2012.

<sup>388</sup> Farid Abdel-Nour, "National Responsibility", *Political Theory*, Volume 31, No. 5, (October, 2003), Sage Publications Inc., 699.

has, in some way, caused it to come about.’<sup>389</sup> But, in the midst of the Nuremberg Trials, German psychiatrist and philosopher Karl Jaspers sounded a reminder:

‘The sense of political liability lets no man dodge liability. We are accountable for the outcomes we help to bring about.’<sup>390</sup>

I would argue that the responsibility to ensure the integrity of a people and their national story is not something we can delegate, it is a responsibility that vests in every single one of us as a consequence of our humanity. Societies which fail to interrogate their histories end up carrying a burden of shame and humiliation that flows on from their ineptitude. This burden extends, not just to those who have been slipshod in their custodial duties, but to their descendants.

Blakely also asserts that defaming and distorting pillar events is not a crime<sup>391</sup> but I posit that the credibility of national stories rests on the assumption that they have *credibility*. Insofar as the publication of false and/or injurious statements concerning a person or a member of that person’s family, (whether that person be living or deceased), if the reputation of a person is damaged a biographer leaves himself/herself open to a suit for defamation. To be successful in an action for defamation in Australia a plaintiff must demonstrate the defamation has been published, attaches to the person defamed and has either caused harm or has the potential to cause harm to that person and/or that person’s reputation. Willfully remaining conspicuously

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<sup>389</sup> Abdel-Nour, “National Responsibility”, 699.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid, 693.

<sup>391</sup> “Australia is looking for a story so it distorts pillar events.” Edward J. Blakely critique on Janne Lindrum’s draft PhD proposal.

silent on a person's record of achievement is heinous as the offender escapes the provisions of the Defamation Act through burial of a history.

For nations, particularly those which perceive themselves to be young nations who are, in one way or another, forced to compete for the spoils of industry, there is the temptation to manufacture, glorify and embellish. In the foreword to *200 Years of Australian Sport* (1988) former Olympian Dawn Fraser says:

As the whistle blows on the first two hundred years, we can look back with immense pride on the achievements in so many sports, by so many people. The challenge of keeping up with the rest of the world is an immense one.<sup>392</sup>

I argue, rather than keeping up with the world we should aim to lead the world by building a credible and more balanced narrative.

*The Uncrowned King* unearths a champion's life to demonstrate it is logic absentia to plunder a unique generational story. As Joanne Scott argues:

[Tight] time lines, publishing deadlines, secrecy, being told what or what not to write lead to a culture of mythology and the problem with a culture of mythology is it gives birth to grand meaningless epics and grand meaningless epics don't amount to much.<sup>393</sup>

Of course, it takes time and money to collect and check knowledge but, as Scott says: 'scholarship, authorial independence and taking personal responsibility are crucial to getting personal and national stories right.'<sup>394</sup> Yet, as Modjeska points out, 'papers sit heavily around us and...the weight [of the information sometimes] acts as a damper on the imagination.'<sup>395</sup> Whilst agreeing with

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<sup>392</sup> Dawn Fraser in Head and Lester, *200 Years of Australian Sport* with foreword by Dawn Fraser, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1988), 8.

<sup>393</sup> Joanne Scott, "Does it have to be compelling? A History of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet", in *True Stories*, Writing History Conference, 2-3 April, 2011, National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT, (NP).

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>395</sup> Modjeska, *Poppy*, 193

Modjeska, I also argue that the principles of scholarship require a writer to delve into boxes as one does not know whether there is something of value inside. I acknowledge, however, the enormous personal cost that attaches to this effort as well as the reality that not everything in a box of research material will serve a purpose. The critical task is to grasp hold of those pieces of the puzzle that will best serve to paint a picture of what actually happened in order to render a genuine account acknowledging that there is a framework to be found in historical record and the historian in the storyteller needs to

abide by the rules of evidence, abandon any metaphor which insufficiently reflects the data at hand [whilst, at the same time] never excluding completely undecidability; thereby attesting to the possibility of alternative emplotments.<sup>396</sup>

As historian Hayden White points out, the challenges for the writer of history are monumental with probably the greatest challenge being finding a causeway through 'the possible' – the realm of science, 'the imaginary' – the referent for art and literature – and 'the historical' – which is the plausible. For White, 'The plausible is, in a sense, more real for the individual than the truth of science because it relates its desires to the social context.'<sup>397</sup>

Speaking of the past, some critics, such as historian Geoffrey Blainey, for example, argue that Australia has been shaped by its social fabric and geographic location in the world. Distance was a barrier for Australian scholars, more particularly in the pioneering era. A small population, scattered over a large continent, isolated from cultural institutions overseas and heavily reliant on limited and potentially unreliable sources did not favour talented and gifted Australians. Rather, it served to fuel the tall poppy syndrome, the silver spoon syndrome, the small town syndrome and the inferiority syndrome and, in more recent times, the age syndrome – a reluctance to engage older people in the

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<sup>396</sup> Wulf Kansteiner, "Hayden White's critique of the writing of History", *History and Theory*, Volume 32, No.3, (October, 1993), 281. (pp. 273-295)

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid*, 282.

work force which has resulted in a loss of wisdom and experience <sup>398</sup> – as well as nurture a unique set of symbolic language codes which are now firmly entrenched. These codes enable Australians to classify people as ‘Australian’ or ‘unAustralian’ and give rise to deep-rooted feelings of inferiority and vulnerability which, over time, have become operating principles.

In the context of the national story the question remains: Would our national story flow more strongly if talented and gifted Australians had not been forced to carve out their careers in other parts of the world? We can never know the answer to this question but it is true to say we remain blissfully unaware of many of the remarkable achievements of Australian citizens in Australia let alone those who have achieved distinction overseas yet this awareness is critical to our growth as a nation as it serves to widen perspective. Whether Horace Lindrum’s achievements have been overlooked by Australian scholars as a consequence of the tyranny of distance is debatable. I suspect any debate on the matter would be widely contested on the ground ‘isolation’ may have acted as a stimulus for artistry rather than a damper on innovation and imagination. Australia’s rich history of achievement across a wide spectrum of human enterprise is evidence of that.

Certainly, the colourful experiences reflected in Horace Lindrum’s career at the billiard table suggest Lindrum didn’t let distance prevent him from writing a fascinating life. To the contrary, the tyranny of distance appears in many ways to have worked to his advantage. However, distance clearly worked to his disadvantage in terms of national awareness of what he actually achieved in the name of the nation. Whereas Walter Lindrum’s relatively short career in comparison, the latter part of it played out in Australia, appears to have served

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<sup>398</sup> The Tall Poppy Syndrome is the perceived need to cut people down to size. The Silver Spoon Syndrome is the perceived obligation to provide jobs for the boys who form a part of the old school tie (old school boy) network. The Small Town Syndrome is the inability to look from the outside in. The Inferiority Syndrome is the perceived need to engage Chief Executive Officers from outside the country to un Australian companies which has not always been in the interests of the nation. The reluctance to engage older people in the work force which has resulted in a loss of wisdom and experience.

to dilute the Lindrum family story and cement the fictitious mythology that there was only one champion in the Lindrum family household. Although I do not believe this is the sole reason for the focus on Walter Lindrum, business interests have played a role which is evidenced by the grab for the Lindrum name for a hotel in Melbourne.

Interestingly, Horace Lindrum's experiences during the Golden Age of Flight (1933-1970) are suggestive of certain character traits, more especially a belief in Self and a fearless, adventuresome spirit. These characteristics are also reflected in the national story that evolved during the pioneering era although the national story during that same period is also marked by alienation, pessimism and yearnings to overcome adversity. There can be little doubt that these sentiments grew out of colonial disillusionment, from being transported to an alien land from which there was no escape or being promised a paradise that didn't materialise, either way colonisation 'left a strong stamp on the way [white] Australians have chosen to see themselves and this has shaped their attitudes.'<sup>399</sup> Artworks and literature have also greatly impacted upon the way Australians see nation and self.

Historian Marcus Clarke famously saw the Australian landscape as, 'grotesque, weird, inchoate and beyond the bounds of reason.'<sup>400</sup> Poet A. D. Hope labelled Australia a 'vast parasite, robber state, where second-hand Europeans pullulate timidly on the edge of alien shores.'<sup>401</sup> Nobel prizewinning author Patrick White's image of Australia is even more disturbing. White sees people clinging to the fringes of the self as we cling to the fringes of the continent, shrinking from "the deep end of the unconscious" – disabling, lacking compassion, racked with paranoia, indifferent to the Truth, living with

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<sup>399</sup> Simon Jackson, 'The "Stump Jumpers": National Identity and the mythology of Australian Industrial Design in the Period 1930-1975', *Design Issues*, Volume 18, No. 4, (Autumn, 2002), 15.

<sup>400</sup> Marcus Clarke in Paul Carter's *The Road to Botany Bay*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1987), 14.

<sup>401</sup> A. D. Hope in *The Penguin Book of Australian Verse*, edited by H. P Heseltine, (Ringwood: Penguin, Ringwood, 1979), 190.

an underlying, if unacknowledged, suspicion that our position may, in fact, be unsustainable.<sup>402</sup>

There are similarities between the thoughts and imaginings of Hope (1907-2000) and White (1912-1990) and those of Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Freud (1856-1939) which suggests Hope and White were beneficiaries of the literary legacy of those who emphasise the deficiencies in man rather than man's potentialities. White's depiction is particularly Freudian. Paranoia and genetic flaws in the white Australian personality, character and psyche highlight what White perceives to be the fragility of the white Australian occupation of a space which is instinctively known to belong to the Other, a stance White sees as unsustainable. These perceptions pose a key question: What is the legacy for white and Indigenous Australians alike if white Australians see themselves as robbers in a vast robber state? Do they subconsciously suppress that thought over generations rather than confront and reconcile it?

Another factor to consider is 'dependency'. For a long period (1788-1972) Australians were, to a large degree, dependent upon the Mother country, England, and taught to look up to her. The Mother was perceived to be more capable than the infant. This long-term dependency may have led to developmental delay / national impairment. Delay can occur in one or more areas and might be compared to an infant's failure to reach developmental milestones. The reality that we, as a nation, need to improve our listening skills, for example, is borne out by the reception we gave the book *The Lucky Country* in 1964. The author, social critic Donald Horne believed Australia was sick, a sickness primarily attributable to poor leadership, lack of vision and intellectual ineptitude. To Horne, Australian politics was:

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<sup>402</sup> Patrick White in Catriona Elder's *Being Australian: Narratives of National Identity*, (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2007), 18.

an empty public space, devoid of logic, rigour and reason. Intellectuals who wished to walk the corridors of power were best advised to leave their intellectuality at home.<sup>403</sup>

Horne was also highly critical of our business practices, in particular, the importation of people from outside Australia to run Australian organisations, over-reliance on primary industry (mining booms), insufficient attention to environmental factors (food production and water supply) and sacrifice of more diverse / more balanced economic drivers. Ironically, instead of listening to what Horne had to say the national psyche fell in love with the title of Horne's book, allowing the phrase the *Lucky Country* to be used to describe our weather, lifestyle, history, good fortune, geographic isolation in relation to the world's trouble spots and to be further paraphrased by politicians as 'The Clever Country'. In more recent times, Mackay has suggested Australians are suffering an identity crisis<sup>404</sup> which has been exacerbated by a succession of revolutions, leading him to pose the question:

[Are] we Brand Me and Brand You jostling for attention in a crowded marketplace called society and / or an intangible marketplace called cyberspace or caring, co-operative egalitarian selves who think first of the Other before we think of the self?<sup>405</sup>

Identity, of course, is unique to the person and forged ineluctably and organically by genetic heritage but there is a duality at the heart of identity in the same way as there is a duality at the heart of the nation-state. That duality is life's experience which is inextricably linked to 'time'. I posit, crucial to the

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<sup>403</sup> Donald Horne in Nick Cater's *The Lucky Culture: And the Rise of an Australian Ruling Class*, (Australia: Harper Collins, 2013), 135.

<sup>404</sup> Erik Homburger Erikson (1902-1994), German born American developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst known for his theory on psychosocial development of human beings. Erik Erikson's ideas were greatly influenced by Sigmund Freud. Ego develops as it successfully resolves crises that are distinctly social in nature. These involve developing a sense of trust in others, developing a sense of identity in society, and helping the next generation prepare for the future.

<sup>405</sup> Mackay, *The Good Life: What makes a Life Worth Living?* 16.

development of national identity is an understanding of the past. In the absence of this understanding there can be no proper understanding of the self and its relationship to society and no real understanding of the collective 'nation'. As Campbell says:

A transmutation of the whole social order is necessary, so that through every detail and act of secular life the vitalizing image of the universal God-man who is actually immanent and effective in all of us may be somehow be made known to consciousness.<sup>406</sup>

I would take Campbell's argument a step further by suggesting, if this transmutation does not occur, the hypotheses of critics such as cultural historian Richard White may prove to be correct. White asserts any hope of ever capturing the soul of the nation (Australia) is illusory: 'not even our historians can help us out. To the contrary they have often contributed to [the national story's] mystification.'<sup>407</sup> Sport historians Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz say: 'sport is an important lens or mirror for examining the larger ideas and issues of human society.'<sup>408</sup>

[Yet] Australian literature and journalism on sport is essentially idolistic, jingoistic, celebratory, limp, ghost-written, chronology-enslaved autobiography in too many instances, often exculpatory or 'excusatory' in defeat...[and] often stops short of analysing the story and rarely takes the next step, which is to evaluate critically.<sup>409</sup>

If we accept White, Booth and Tatz, there is need for the national consciousness to refocus on the art of craftsmanship.

Reflecting on Australia's obsession with sport Patrick White observed that the Australian 'passion for perpetual motion is perhaps for fear that we

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<sup>406</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 335.

<sup>407</sup> Richard White, *Inventing Australia*, (North Sydney: George Allen & Unwin Australia Pty. Limited, 4th edition, 1985), viii.

<sup>408</sup> Booth and Tatz, *One-Eyed: A View of Australian Sport*, xii.

<sup>409</sup> *Ibid*, xiii

may have to sit down and face reality if we don't keep going.'<sup>410</sup> White's observation is, perhaps, a trigger for debate on whether we should take time out from our busy lives to listen to what our scholars are saying but Australian journalist and author Nick Cater asserts academics have nothing to contribute to the national story debate. In Cater's view:

Australian intellectuals have become exiles in their own country, disengaged from civic debate. They have not yet surrendered to the magic of democracy and the wisdom of crowds.<sup>411</sup>

Cater does not define 'wisdom' but if the new wisdom is disregarding the past, plundering stories of the nation and accepting the status quo – that rather than being fair-minded it is acceptable to be 'partisan, intolerant, narrow and unreasonable'<sup>412</sup> – the crowd might consider turning to intellectuals for the sort of leadership that is required for a review of our national value systems.

In this chapter I have examined the meaning of 'national story', drawn the distinction between 'nation' and 'state', discussed the impact of secularism on state and individual, investigated the concept of nationalism, reflected upon differing perceptions of Australia and Australians, considered the factors that have forged Australian identity and stressed the importance of constructing a credible picture of individual and nation. In the next chapter I appraise the concept of the sporting hero, cultural shifts in sport and the evolution of the new sporting model.

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<sup>410</sup> Booth and Tatz, *One-Eyed: A View of Australian Sport*, 228.

<sup>411</sup> Cater, *The Lucky Culture and the Rise of an Australian Ruling Class*, 289.

<sup>412</sup> Booth and Tatz, *One-Eyed: A View of Australian Sport*, xvi.

## Chapter Three

### The Australian Sporting Hero

Chapter Two of this dissertation discussed the role biography plays in the construction of national stories, arguing that biography is critical to forging identity and capturing the nation's soul.

In this chapter I examine the complex concept of the sporting hero, cultural shifts in sport and the evolution of the new sporting model asserting, as I do, that the new sporting model is progressively subverting the commandments of sport and radically altering our perceptions of the sporting hero. This subversion is attributable to the influence of big business and its increased political influence which is inextricably linked to nationalism.

Firstly I begin with an examination of what it means to be a sporting hero. From the Greek '*heros*', heroes are people who demonstrate devotion to duty, act with courage in the face of extreme danger and adversity or – from a position of weakness – display courage and the will to self-sacrifice, that is, heroism for some greater good of humanity. When we speak of sportsmen/women, perhaps, the terms 'champion', title or medal holder or luminary are more appropriate?

The representation of Sir Donald Bradman as Australia's greatest sporting hero is a case in point.<sup>413</sup> Media baron Kerry Packer had a vested interest in making Sir Donald a hero of the twentieth century just as gambling supremo John Wren had a vested interest in comparing Walter Lindrum to Phar Lap in the 1930s, later dubbing him the 'Bradman of Billiards'. Sporting bodies

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<sup>413</sup> Sir Donald Bradman was secretary to the Australian Sporting Association, a body founded by my great-uncle, Walter. Walter was the Chairman. Sir Donald believed my great-uncle was 'The greatest nugget to come out of the West.'

today have a vested interest in elevating their top athletes to god-like status to maintain the profile of their sports and keep their sponsors happy.

These champions have survived the judgment of time thus far but historical time is not something that is fixed. As historians come to review facts through fresh eyes, new thinking comes into play and champions, once thought 'heroes', are seen as 'champions in perspective'. According to author E F. Ziegler<sup>414</sup> an acceptable list of pre-requisites for the sporting hero or celebrity encompass: Physical Excellence: Health, fitness, skill as an athlete. Moral Excellence: Generosity, self-control, and righteousness. Social Excellence: protecting interests of the community before self and Longevity: Surviving the judgment of time with respect of all of the above.<sup>415</sup>

Campbell asserts, the supreme hero is: 'he who opens the eye'<sup>416</sup> and is 'endowed with a pure understanding, restraining the self with firmness...controlling the speech, body, and mind, ever engaged in meditation and concentration, and cultivating freedom from passion forsaking conceit and power...and free from ego.'<sup>417</sup>

Who is and who isn't a sporting hero is determined, in the first instance, by the popularity and image of the sport, the marketing potential and/or controversy surrounding the personality, social forces and big business that have a vested interest in elevating the profile of the sportsman/woman to mythical status and, insofar as the pioneering era goes, whether or not the personality has the potential to drive newspaper circulation. Therefore, the

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<sup>414</sup> E. F. Ziegler author of *Physical Education in Sport*, 1982.

<sup>415</sup> E. F. Ziegler, 'The Sport Hero Phenomenon' in 'International Journal of Physical Education', Schorndorf, F. R. Germany, 1988, Volume 25, No. 3, 9.

<sup>416</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 296.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid, 304.

'hero label' in and over historical time is collectively subjective even though the term 'hero' might be deemed to be a 'reflection of our own divinity.'<sup>418</sup>

Australia's best wicket keeper Rod Marsh, for example, was infamous for drinking a plane dry between Sydney and London. Australian batsman Dougie Walters was a chain smoker and would be late out to bat because he hadn't finished his last hand of poker. Muhammed Ali was an egotist known to taunt his opponents and threaten, 'Someone is going to die tonight'. John McEnroe was temperamental. Michael Jordan was a gambler. Les Darcy absconded to avoid conscription in World War I. American baseball player Babe Ruth was a known drunkard, glutton, womaniser and hell raiser.

Writing on the culture of sport in Australia, Stoddart says:

By the advent of World War I, the basic patterns and social ramifications of Australian sport were well formed with social education and economic value the major distinguishing characteristics. One the one hand, sports like rowing and Rugby Union with nurseries in the private schools stressed the preparation for life offered by sports training.

On the other, sports like billiards and snooker had already produced the first in a string of world-class professionals. The Lindrum family, notably brothers Fred and Walter followed by nephew Horace, showed how sports prowess could be turned to economic advantage....[Walter's] skills, in particular, became so great during the interwar period that rule changes were enacted in an attempt to curb his scoring feats.<sup>419</sup>

Lindrum [presumably meaning Walter] also demonstrated the gathering pace of social power accorded Australian sports heroes.

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<sup>418</sup> Campbell, *The Hero of a Thousand Faces*, 276.

<sup>419</sup> This statement serves to perpetuate the myth that Walter's prowess forced a change in the rules of billiards due to his overall domination of the sport. Walter's focus on nursery cannons brought caused a controversy and the governing body ruled 'an exclusive focus on nursery cannon play' was a breach of the Fair Play principle. This had happened before. It wasn't the first time. Tom Reece received a ban for the 'Anchor cannon'. These bans should not, however, be taken to read that either player did not demonstrate superlative skill at the table.

There were large numbers of them thrown up between the wars as Australian sport became more and more organised, increasingly competitive and progressively more serious.<sup>420</sup>

Certainly, my great-grandfather cultivated friends at the top end of town and Walter Lindrum was known to be well-connected in the Freemason movement.

It is interesting to note that the Lindrum brothers – Walter and Frederick III – went head to head for the Australian professional billiards title to entertain the navy when the fleet sailed into Sydney Harbour for the first time and before the naval fleet sailed for the Dardanelles. This suggests that, despite the fact that Australia's sporting reputation was in embryo at the time, Stoddart is right to assert that the seeds of a celebrity sporting culture had already been sown.

In April 1912 the Melbourne monthly, *Alcock's Sporting Review*, reported that despite earlier information the Federal Government would not now provide financial assistance to Australia's Olympic Team that year. It was a strange decision, argued the writer, because sport did more than any other social institution to make Australian society what it was, and to display the merits of that system to the world...

According to Stoddart:

This little story is important in four vital respects. First, it shows clearly that the intersection of sport and political considerations is not such a recently emerged phenomenon as many Australians may imagine.

Second, it points out the role of sport in building the character of the Australian nation, a role of considerable importance politically.

Third, it underlines the significance attached to sport in projecting the image of Australia and its people internationally, another highly political consideration.

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<sup>420</sup> Brian Stoddart, in *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, (North Ryde and United Kingdom: Angus & Robertson, 1986),

Fourth, it points to the complex structure of the relationship between sport and politics in Australia...<sup>421</sup>

But, despite such early evidence of organised sport in Australia, Stoddart observes that Australians have been able to separate their love of sport from the politics of sport.

The average person sees “politics” as that profession practised by politicians, people elected to orchestrate public affairs at international, national, state and local levels. Informal institutions such as religion, the arts and sports are not seen as being “political”...

[Further], Australian sport has always been sacrosanct in the change and hurly-burly of life. True heirs to the medieval and early modern worlds, Australians have seen bodily action and intellectual endeavour as entirely separate. Since sport could be separated from intellect, therefore, it could also be separated from the serious social and political organisation of life...

The convention has been that sport is basically unessential to the continuance of the Australian tradition; the practice has been precisely the reverse...

At every level of Australian society there is a political dimension to sports activity.<sup>422</sup>

I agree with Stoddart. No matter how or where sport is played politics comes into play because man in himself is, in part, a political animal.

Walter Lindrum and Donald Bradman came along during the Depression era when good stories were hard to find. Horace Lindrum’s star was in the ascendancy in 1928, the year Mickey Mouse made his debut in *Steamboat Willie*,<sup>423</sup> D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* was banned, Duke Ellington and his Cotton Club Orchestra recorded “Diga Diga Doo”, Amelia Earhart

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<sup>421</sup> Stoddart in *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, 23-57.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>423</sup> Debut November 18, 1928.

became the first woman to fly an aircraft across the Atlantic and Phar Lap arrived on Australian soil.

Billiards was still enjoying popularity in 1928 but by 1936 interest had waned and falling box office receipts opened the doorway to the Golden Age of Snooker. Various critics argue that the decline in the interest of billiards is attributable to my great-uncle Walter Lindrum's overall domination of the game. (He was so good at his sport he could not be beaten). Certainly, there is evidence of Walter's focus on nursery cannon play; delicate, gossamer-like shots whereby the player keeps three balls close together in a nursery, gently moving them along the cushion by striking them softly. This style of play is extremely difficult but monotonous to watch. The nursery cannon was later banned by the British Association and Control Council after an application by New Zealand champion Clark McConachy to the governing body based on a breach of the fifth commandment of sport which says: Thou shalt not take unfair advantage. British professional Tom Reece suffered a similar fate with the Anchor and Pendulum strokes.

Horace Lindrum was twenty-five-years-old when he first reached the final of the world professional snooker championship in 1937 against the more experienced seeded professional British champion Joe Davis and later in life admitted that this was the final he should have won. There are many possible reasons for Lindrum's defeat. Unfamiliarity with the territory and the billiard table, youth, inexperience in major competitive play, nerves, artistry; his love of the audience being paramount to winning the game; and a commitment to the ninth and tenth commandments of sport – 9. Remember the game is the thing. He or she who thinks otherwise is no true sportsman/woman. 10. Honour the game for he/she who plays the game straight and hard wins even when he/she loses.

The sport of snooker enjoyed unparalleled popularity from 1936 to the outbreak of World War II but sporting events pre, during and post the war

served to progressively change the complexion of snooker and, indeed, the complexion of sport. These included the scratching of Phar Lap in the Caulfield Cup (1930); the poisoning of Phar Lap (1932); the Bodyline controversy (1932-33) (the fast leg theory of bowling a cricket ball at the batsman's body so as to cause harm); the mysterious and yet to be explained disappearance of the entries of Horace Lindrum and Frederick III in the world professional billiards championship (1932/33); the nursery cannon controversy (1933), the bombing of Thurston's Hall (1940) which saw the destruction of valuable billiards antiques, technological advancements, acquisition of cricket and subversion of a core commandment of sport; winning and moneymaking taking precedence over playing the game.

In 1951/52 the British players boycotted the world professional snooker championship. The boycott was allegedly over better pay rates but the protest may also have been politically driven by the fear of losing the title to Australia given Britain had already lost the billiards title to New Zealand. The boycott was a particularly significant event as the actions taken by the professional players' association led to a spate of controversies and coups that were still going on well into the 1970's and which ultimately triggered the demise of the governing body.<sup>424</sup>

I also would opine that the death of the last member of the billiard playing Lindrums in 1974 not only marked the death of the sport of gentlemen but, ironically, just as Al Jolson's song "Toot Toot Tootsie Goodbye" (1927) had bid farewell to the silent movie era, Horace Lindrum's death bid farewell to a snooker era the likes of which we will never see again.

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<sup>424</sup> The governing body was established by the world master of billiards British champion John Roberts Senior in 1885 and Roberts and Lord Kitchener are credited with formulating the rules of snooker. However, there is a reference to a game that sounds like snooker in Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* which suggests the history of snooker is far richer than initially thought and, indeed, some researchers believe the history of billiards can be traced to the Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs.

The genesis of the corrosive process began with the technological shifts that removed the fan/crowd from the player. Other changes which had a major impact on sport include, the establishment of John Wren's illegal betting operation in Collingwood which made gambling readily available to the masses, the conversion of the automatic totalisator<sup>425</sup> – from a fair voting machine to a gambling machine – installation of the first machine at the Ellerslie racecourse in Auckland in 1913 which signalled the export of gambling as a commodity, television, Kerry Packer's acquisition of cricket and the elevation of Sir Donald Bradman.

The World Cricket series which was set up in opposition to established international cricket was also driven by big business interests and the adoption of a philosophy of greed. With the onset of colour television big business interests saw the potential of televised sport. For entrepreneur Kerry Packer televised cricket presented an opportunity to enhance the ratings and increase the value of his television station, Channel Nine.

The following article published by journalist E. W. Swanton in the *The Cricketer* in 1977 provides a snapshot of the events leading up to the cricket revolution:

The Lord's Committee Room in its time has seen several occasions of high drama but nothing perhaps quite so extraordinary as the confrontation on Thursday June 24 between an emergency committee of the International Cricket Board.

It came at the end of six weeks of suspense and uncertainty following the shattering news in the second week of May that Packer [Kerry], completely unknown to any Cricket authorities, had contacted 35 leading cricketers, half of them

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<sup>425</sup> George Alfred Julius (1873-1946) was a Mechanical Engineer. President of the Engineering Association of New South Wales 1910-1913. Chairman of the Standards Association of Australia 1929-1939. President of Australian National Research Council 1932-1937. In 1926, Prime Minister S. M. (Viscount) Bruce sought Julius's advice on the Bill to establish the CSIRO and appointed Julius Chairman of the CSIRO. Julius remained chairman until 1945. Julius also sat on the Board of the Australian Council of Aeronautics and Army Invention Directorate.

Australian, at reputedly low salaries, to play for the next 3 years in matches promoted by him for the benefit of Channel 9.

In the beginning, many cricketers refused participation but Packer pressed ahead. The 'Howzat!' advertising campaign developed the profile of the sport and accelerated the development of a cult-following and, by midway through 1977, the partnership of entrepreneurs Robertson<sup>426</sup> & Cornell had contracted thirty-five of the world's best cricketers to play in international tournaments in Australia. By the end of the same year, fifty players had signed up to highly lucrative contracts that could not in any way, shape or form be compared to traditional arrangements.

Elevation of the profile of Sir Donald Bradman<sup>427</sup> was part and parcel of the well-thought out and well-executed plan to turn the sport of cricket into an industry. This plan gathered momentum when Prime Minister John Howard came to power in 1996. An ardent cricket buff, Howard used cricket as an instrument to market self and nation, going as far as to incorporate a question on Bradman on the application for Australian citizenship. The recent tragic death of cricketer Phillip Hughes indicates just how much the nation still uses the discourse of the hero of Campbell's antiquity to describe a sportsman's

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<sup>426</sup> Austin Robertson was a journalist and player manager. John Cornell was the brains behind the career rise of comedienne Paul Hogan.

<sup>427</sup> Bradman was captain of the Australian cricket team but Arthur Morris (1922-2015) helped 'The Invincibles' to win the test series in 1948 – 4-0. In the previous Test, at Leeds, Morris managed 182 in a 301-run partnership with Bradman, helping Australia to chase 404 runs for victory in 345 minutes. He had helped Bradman, then troubled by Denis Compton's bowling, by hitting the Englishman out of the attack. The partnership brought the then highest winning fourth-innings Test score. Morris hit three centuries and three more fifties in the 1948 Tests to top the averages with 87; Bradman's average was 72.57. Neville Cardus wrote: 'Morris played pedigree cricket, blue-blood aristocracy.' And: 'Morris was once more beyond praise – masterful, stylish, imperturbable, sure in defence, quick and handsome in stroke play. His batting is true to himself, charming and good mannered but reliant and thoughtful.' Other distinguished English cricket writers shared Cardus's admiration. E. W. Swanton wrote: 'Few more charming men have played for Australia and I cannot name one who was more popular with his opponents.' Once asked what he had gained from cricket, [Morris] said: 'Poverty'. Cricketers of his era were paid little more than expenses. ..Yet he held little envy of today's cricketing millionaires. 'Good luck to them. I only hope they enjoy the game as much as I did,' His enjoyment was not unqualified. *Newcastle Herald*, August 25, 2015, "Opinion". 11.

journey. Hughes 'set out responsibly and intentionally to perform the deed,'<sup>428</sup> that is, to follow his cricketing dream and he was prepared to struggle and ultimately die to achieve that end. The same can be said of Australian cricketer and highly regarded commentator Richie Benaud.<sup>429</sup> Richie Benaud and his wife, Daphne, were critical to Kerry Packer executing his plan for cricket. Today, cricket is very big business with countries like India, England and Australia receiving millions of dollars to host events and further stir national passion for the sport.

When big business and national interests are at play a champion is sometimes elevated to the position of a mythical / god-like status that ensures the champion is protected from smears. They become a symbol of spiritual enlightenment. This status is invariably maintained in spite of inherent character flaws which would otherwise shatter illusions. Interestingly, in Australia, some of our heroes have enjoyed this protection whilst others have not. According to scholar J. W. Deacon '[The] obsession to reduce celebrities and 'would-be' heroes to the ranks of ordinary people is recognised as the 'tall poppy syndrome', and is very much a part of the Australian culture.'<sup>430</sup> While I concur with Deacon I argue that rather than falling victim to the 'tall poppy syndrome', sportspeople often come under scrutiny for breaching the traditional commandments of sport and failing to live up to Ziegler's pre-requisites.

Of Ziegler's pre-requisites physical excellence is an imperative but I argue it is mental excellence which determines the quality of the execution. Rather than focus on the eye we should focus on the head (thinking). Insofar as moral excellence, 'righteousness' is a theological concept which attaches to

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<sup>428</sup> Campbell, with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth*, 158.

<sup>429</sup> Richard 'Richie' Benaud OBE (1930-2015), Australian cricketer and highly regarded commentator.

<sup>430</sup> J. W. Deacon, "Walter Lindrum: An Australian Sporting Hero", Masters Thesis, Queensland University, Queensland, 1996, 970304, Catalogue 04-03-1997, BCODE3, 11.

decency, integrity, morality, justice, honesty, piety and so on. Some elite sportsmen and women have engaged in the active promotion of gambling, alcohol and tobacco knowing there is ample and credible evidence to suggest promotion of these habits is likely to have an adverse impact on the minds of the young and impressionable. Others have promoted alcohol and health services simultaneously passing a confusing message. This is a long way from Ziegler's concept of righteousness. Social excellence is tied to the concept of righteousness, an ability to communicate effectively and present oneself in such a way as to project a positive image of self and nation so as to advance the interests of the one and the Other.

Whether the feats of an athlete and/or the story of an athlete's life survive into the future is dependent upon how the sportsperson's life captures the imagination during his/her lifetime, to what extent the magic of the sportsperson's life captures and continues to capture the imagination of the nation, the importance of the sport during the life of the sportsperson in their nation's context, changing perceptions of the sport for which the sportsperson was famous, the quality of the lessons to be learned from the sportsperson's life, efforts made to preserve the image of the sportsperson and the lessons of the sportsperson's life and/or the value to the nation of 'using' the sportsperson's name and history to advance the profile of the nation.

*In The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history* (2005), Booth points out that 'Structural Marxists conceptualise sport as an ideological state apparatus. Sport functions as an ideology to preserve and perpetuate capitalist structures. It achieves this in three ways.'<sup>431</sup>

First: sport celebrates capitalist values such as competition, discipline, hard work and achievement. With regard to the

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<sup>431</sup> Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 55.

latter, elite sport, in particular, is a form of work that similarly emphasises efficient and maximum production...the champion is fabricated in the image of the worker and the track in the image of the factory. Athletic activity has become a form of production [rather than an art] and takes on all the characteristics of industrial production.

Second: sport retards the development of the working class consciousness. On the one hand watching sport offers the working classes an emotional safety valve for the release of aggressive feelings which might otherwise be turned on the real class oppressors. On the other it provides a false sense of escape and functions as a compensatory mechanism to an alienated existence.

Third, commercial sports such as professional boxing, horse-racing and motor sports are primarily profit maximising business enterprise[s] in which investment functions to accumulate capital. Sport also stimulates the accumulation of capital indirectly in other ways: providing a market for goods and services associated with it (sports clothing and equipment, gambling etc.) and functions as a sales adjunct...through...sponsorship and advertising.<sup>432</sup>

In the context of this dissertation Marxist theory is relevant. Proficient at billiards by the age of twelve, the Lindrums were exponents of elite billiards and, in the case of Horace Lindrum, elite billiards and snooker, into their later years. Horace was fifty-eight-years-old when he recorded his one-thousandth snooker century in public performance. Yet, despite shared brilliance with the cue, the philosophy of sport adopted by Walter was diametrically opposed to the philosophy adopted by his brother, Frederick III, and his nephew, Horace.

All three players were men of art and science but Walter used pure mathematics to control the game to his own ends and aligned himself with gambling and big business interests whereas Frederick III and Horace used science to present the game from an artistic perspective and rejected an

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<sup>432</sup> Booth, *The Field: Truth and fiction in sport history*, 55-56.

association with the gambling industry. The sporting culture had not evolved to where it is today. In the Lindrum era prize money was modest and there was more kudos attached to competing, winning a trophy or making an audience happy than banking a cheque. Since the introduction of the totalisator, I argue athletic activity has become a form of production crafted to maximise profits.

Notwithstanding their diametrically opposed sporting philosophies, I assert the Lindrums met Ziegler's physical, mental, moral and social excellence tests despite the fact there was an association with the alcohol, gambling and tobacco industries. I say this because the Lindrum era was the era of major tobacco sponsorship when drinking and smoking were promoted, not only as socially acceptable practices, but as glamorous pursuits that enhanced the aura of the self. The medical evidence we have available to us today simply did not exist or, if it did, it was not made known within the public realm. To the contrary, cigarette brand Craven A, for example, advertised: 'Smoke Craven A for your throat's sake.'

Insofar as gambling is concerned, from the period of the Bank Crash in 1893 to the Depression years (1929-1932), gambling was rife in 'Australia's blackest decade.'<sup>433</sup> It represented a means of survival and bookmaking was perceived to be a mathematical way of making a living from eager punters seeking a more exclusive interchange with their gambling practices. Daley asserts that it was at this historical moment that, 'sport [started to play] a powerful role and, for some, sport literally became a matter of economic life and death.'<sup>434</sup> Interestingly, this historical moment also saw the establishment of John Wren's illegal betting operation in Collingwood and the establishment of the City Tattersalls Club; the only club to have its own Act of Parliament.

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<sup>433</sup> M. T. Daley, *One Hundred Years of Australian Sport: The Golden Century: A History of the New South Wales Sports Club, Sydney*, (Sydney: New South Wales Sports Club, Sydney, 1996), 165.

<sup>434</sup> *Ibid*, 165.

Frederick II, my great-grandfather, became a bookmaker for the Western Australian branch of Tattersalls (an exclusive club network established to provide a social outlet for gentlemen only and where gentlemen could gamble on the races) in 1904. This association brought him into contact with gambling supremos John Wren and Sol Green, the biggest bookmakers in the country. Wren sponsored Walter Lindrum and, according to author Andrew Ricketts, 'sent a manager to England with Walter Lindrum to organise an elaborate betting plunge...Walter later returned to Australia a deeply disillusioned man.'<sup>435</sup> On his return, Walter retired from competitive play, and, for the remainder of his career, used his cue for good ends; to raise money for charity. In social settings, however, he became somewhat of a recluse.

Given the elite sportsman/sportswoman, in the majority of circumstances, enjoys a relatively short career, one might argue economic survival is as much an issue for the sportsman/sportswoman of today as it was for the sportsman/sportswoman in the Lindrum era. However, by comparison, today's elite sportsperson is handsomely rewarded by lucrative sponsorship, prize money and attractive income packages and his/her benefits frequently linger long after careers have come to an end. Notwithstanding, there are significant flow-on effects, some of which existed in earlier times, but appear to have escalated at an alarming rate.

Depression, disillusionment, family break-up, violence, addiction to drugs, alcohol, tobacco and gambling and physical injury (from risk taking and failure to protect the physical self) are the direct results of too much pressure being placed upon the physical and mental self. These negative impacts corrupt the biography of self, the biography of family and nation and are destructive to the biography of mankind.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and, for three-quarters of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the sports of billiards and snooker can be said to have functioned on

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<sup>435</sup> Ricketts, *Walter Lindrum: The Phenomenon*, 61.

the traditional commandments of sport which were rooted in the Greek ideal, that is, a sportsperson's ultimate goal is to develop artistic and intellectual excellence. In *Practical Billiards* (1904) billiard champion and author C. Dawson, for example, dubbed billiards 'The Epitome of Life.'<sup>436</sup>

Horace Lindrum met all the pre-requisites. He conducted himself, throughout his fifty year career with distinction and dignity and he was an excellent role model for his chosen sport. With such a member, the Lindrums were fortunate indeed. I opine, since Horace Lindrum's death, the complexion of sport has changed dramatically. Once the sport of palaces, the sport is now controlled by gambling interests.

I assert Horace Lindrum reinforced heroic qualities that set him apart from other members of his family and the wider family of snooker. His refusal to align himself with the gambling industry may provide us with a clue as to why his achievements have not been properly recognised as the gambling ethos in Australia is deeply ingrained. As such Lindrum accepted the call to move from the ordinary world to a world of extraordinary challenges which required him to sacrifice his life to good ends; that is to entertain people across the world.

Further, it might be argued that Lindrum was thrown into his adventures at the billiard table. He was not born a Lindrum and he freely admitted that, as a child, all he wanted to do was travel the world but he accepted his destiny and gave his life to something bigger than himself. Lindrum's heroic qualities, the many references, for example, to his modesty and humility in the winning circumstance and his graciousness in defeat, the pristine manner in which he conducted himself in the name of the nation coupled with his talent with the cue which, according to Brasch, saw him become 'the greatest exhibition player

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<sup>436</sup> C. Dawson, *Practical Billiards*, (Surrey, UK: Self-published, 1904), 214.

the world has ever seen'<sup>437</sup> and the exemplary manner in which he and his mother (my grandmother, Clara Violet) ran Lindrum's Pitt Street, Sydney, which Brasch proclaims to be evidence of 'their expressive love of the game'<sup>438</sup> but, more importantly – as a father – mark him as a champion.

Thus, I opine, Horace Lindrum personified Brasch's ten Commandments of sport, including:

1. Thou shalt not quit.
2. Thou shalt not alibi.
3. Thou shalt no gloat over winning.
4. Thou shalt not sulk over losing.
5. Thou shalt not take unfair advantage.
6. Thou shall not ask odds thou art unwilling to give.
7. Thou shalt always be willing to give thine opponent the benefit of the doubt.
8. Thou shalt not underestimate an opponent or over-estimate thyself.
9. Remember that the game is the thing. He or she who thinks otherwise is no true sportsman/sportswoman.
10. Honour the game, for he/she who plays the game straight and hard wins even when he/she loses.<sup>439</sup>

According to authors John W. Loy, Barry D. McPherson and Gerald Kenyon:

During the twentieth century, sport became a cultural phenomenon of great magnitude and complexity, having both positive and negative consequences for individuals and society at large. It has permeated most, if not all, of our social institutions including education, economics, art, politics, law, mass communications, and international diplomacy. Its' scope is awesome, nearly everyone has become involved in some way, albeit vicariously for most.

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<sup>437</sup> Rudolph Brasch, *How Did Sports Begin: A Look into the Origins of Man at Play*, (Australia: Longman Australia Pty. Limited, 1971), 44.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid, 189.

...[But], With the increase in direct and indirect sport consumption, gambling has also increased since the placing of a wager heightens personal involvement and interest by providing additional various excitement.<sup>440</sup>

Like Loy, McPherson and Kenyon, author Emily Greenspan believes that our interest in sport has turned into an unhealthy obsession and author Duncan Hamilton asserts:

Those of us devoted to sport are frequently guilty of magnifying its importance. Sometimes we over-dramatise and hype it, judge it disproportionately and give it a status that, on sober reflection is nearly always either wrong-headed or plainly unmerited. We just get carried away.<sup>441</sup>

I would take these views a step further asserting that our growing obsession with watching sport is creating a generation of 'couch potatoes' who, through advertising, have become addicted to watching rather than playing sport and/or fanatically using sport, in an industrial sense, to excess rather than as play/recreation. In the latter, sport is a refresher of the mind. In the former, sport is hard work and, if unmonitored, potentially lethal, particularly when the viewer's interest in sport extends to an addiction to gambling or sedentary observation.

Stoddart says:

[Sport] is changing rapidly and will alter even more quickly and radically into the future because of its basis in Australian social, political and economic life...At the centre of all this change lies the ultimate question: How does Australia want to consider, develop and use its sport? If Australia does want to become more competitive internationally, it will have to be prepared for far greater capital investment than

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<sup>440</sup> John W. Loy, Barry D. McPherson and Gerald Kenyon, *Sport and Social Systems: A Guide to the Analysis, Problems and Literature*, (Massachusetts, Menlo Park, California, London, Amsterdam and Dan Mills, Ontario and Sydney: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1978), 3 and 282.

<sup>441</sup> Duncan Hamilton, *Harold Larwood*, (London: Quercus, 2009), 16.

it has been willing to provide thus far. Where that money originates raises questions, in turn, about the priority of needs in Australian life – should millions of dollars be spent on sport while there remain economic needs and inequalities in unemployment, welfare, education and housing?<sup>442</sup>

I agree with Stoddart but I think the question that needs to be asked is: How do Australians want to be perceived by their International counterparts? Do they want to be seen as a smart people who get their priorities right? If so, education is surely a priority as is striking the right balance between an investment in the welfare of Australians, health, major infrastructure programs, scientific research, art and sport. This bodes the question: Is it time elite sport paid its own way given illiteracy rates have risen dramatically.

For sport to fulfill its higher purpose it needs participants to exercise the same reason that a biographer must exercise in coming to the task of writing biography, valuing the importance of sport as recreation as well as the importance of competing on an even and sensible playing field – on and off the field. As Mackay points out, 'on a Golden Rule playing field we'd never swing a punch (literally or metaphorically), deliberately give offence, behave in a way that exploited, deceived or manipulated others or cut moral corners.'<sup>443</sup>

Unfortunately, when powerful forces and big business come onto the playing field, for participant and consumer, the playing field becomes a controlled pitch and participants and consumers become tools for moneymaking ends and there is scant regard for the Golden Rule principle.

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<sup>442</sup> Stoddart in *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, Chapter Eight, Stumps Summary.

<sup>443</sup> Hugh Mackay, *The Good Life: What makes life Worth Living?* (Sydney, Australia: Pan Macmillan Pty. Limited, 2013), 174.

Deacon uses ANZAC and sporting events – the Melbourne Cup, the Stawell Gift and the Austral cycling race<sup>444</sup> – to highlight the character of cultural practises in Australia which include ‘manipulation of the game’ and he asserts Walter Lindrum exemplified these traits because he was so good at his sport he could control the end-game and couldn’t be beaten unless he wanted to be. That is why Walter’s style of play captured the imagination of gambling men. Speaking of the role of the media in sport, Deacon says:

The media are generally charged with the responsibility to ensure that ‘would be’ heroes have any deficiencies exposed to the public to reduce their status accordingly. Any blemishes in character or performance are seized upon by an ever hungry media. We have seen Greg Chappell, Pat Cash and Wally Lewis lose much of the adoration and respect they once held through the treatment given to any indiscretion, on or off the sporting arena.

[In more recent times, swimmers have been targeted by the media but appear to have emerged relatively unscathed].

Yet others have endured.

Sir Donald Bradman, Sir Hubert Opperman, Walter Lindrum, Heather Mackay, Herb Elliott, Rod Laver, Peter Thomson and Dawn Fraser are some of an elite group of sporting champions who have retained their ‘hero’ status long after their competitive days are over.

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<sup>444</sup> The first of these is the celebration of a Military defeat, the successful withdrawal of troops from Gallipoli, whilst the latter, the country’s most important (in terms of interest and involvement) sporting event, is a handicap race where the best horses are forced to carry weights that reduce their chance of winning enormously and, at the same time, make it possible for the lesser horses to compete on favourable terms with the champions. The Stawell Gift and Austral cycling race are handicap events in which the best performers are penalised to such an extent that they concede impossible starts. It has become common place for the more gifted runners and cyclists to hide their true form in order to receive a realistic handicap which will give them a chance in the race.

It is interesting that Dawn Fraser in particular has remained popular with the Australian people, despite her rebellious nature, and despite various attempts by both officialdom and the media to tarnish her image.<sup>445</sup>

The Horace Lindrum story can but serve to elevate, not just enrich the vibrant history of the sport of snooker, but the sporting history of our nation. What impact have these ideas had on the ways in which I've reviewed, regarded and written my father's life?

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I examine how I came to write *The Uncrowned King* which has at its core the heroic life of Horace Lindrum. I also discuss my experience as a Lindrum and, more especially, what it was like to grow up in a family of champions. In writing the story I found myself continuously asking why my father's achievements had not been recognised and why he had been forgotten by his nation. I had to concede Australia's tyranny of distance may have played a role in this. I was also able to examine how some stories capture our imagination for a short time whilst others, such as Bradman's, have greater longevity.

The success of a story and its longevity is largely dependent upon the magic or essence of the story, the excitement and/or controversy the story generates, the story's capacity to cross borders, relevance in terms of the history of the nation and the history of other parts of the world, relative meaning to a generation, a generation's intellectual and emotional capacity to comprehend and appreciate the language of the story and the value of the story in terms of that generation's own needs and perceived needs of future generations. The

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<sup>445</sup> Deacon, "Walter Lindrum: An Australian Sporting hero", 4-5.

hero is an important component in that as the stories of heroes serve as a reminder that 'the mission of life is to live [your] potentiality.'

It would be a loss to Australia's sporting history if the Lindrum family story were to be lost. In writing this dissertation I have asserted that there is something to be learned from family stories as well as wider historical narratives. Whilst 'in the body of the society as a whole the individual can only be an organ'<sup>446</sup> an understanding of the nation can be lost to us if family stories are disregarded. When that family is one of sporting influence such as the Lindrums we lose a great understanding of sport, the hero and the sporting nation.

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<sup>446</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 330.

## Chapter Four

### Writing *The Uncrowned King*

I did not set out to write my father's life but it might be argued *The Uncrowned King* was predetermined. I was born into a family of champions and inherited the history / story of that family and was, therefore, destined to write *The Uncrowned King*. Other family members could equally have written the story and may yet write it with their own set of perceptions, memories and experiences. Equally, it might also be argued this story is the product of pure coincidence; traceable to my entry into University in 2006 and, more particularly, my participation in a creative writing class in 2007. It was never my intention to study creative writing. To the contrary, my aim was to re-hone my performing arts skills. Creative writing was an option on the University timetable which just happened to fit with my electives. If I had selected a different subject, *The Uncrowned King* may never have been written.

Because of the enormity of the Lindrum story, and because of my attachment to it, I have experienced periods of great joy and periods of deep depression. Looking into the rear vision mirror is never easy, particularly when one is looking back over one's own life – laying bare the soul, peeling back memories, unfolding regret, much as one peels the layers of an onion – a task that inevitably forces one to reflect on decisions taken on the journey through time. As I say in the book, on more than one occasion I've been forced to tell myself: 'Lindrum, don't get emotional' and I can relate to the sentiments expressed by George Orwell:

[The writing initiative] is a horrible, exhausting struggle like a long bout of some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand.<sup>447</sup>

At the very beginning of the project the aim was to get the story written as quickly as possible in order to restore the Lindrum name and history to its once hallowed position which is something my mother wanted to see happen. Sadly, my mother subsequently slipped into a state of progressive vascular dementia and will never come to appreciate the restoration. This reality has, on more than one occasion, made me feel like throwing in the towel.

Through the writing process I have come to understand that there is a fine line between allowing the imagination to roam freely and telling the truth of the story. Finding the right balance is the greatest challenge, more particularly for those writers who come to the task from a theatrical background as I have, as the authorial voice is the voice of the stage rather than the page. Also, I have come to appreciate that the language of the self is the framework upon which we build the stories of our lives. It is the language we use through this journey that ultimately determines the tale we bequeath to our descendants and the quality of the book that ultimately sits upon the shelf.

Authors such as Francesca Rendle-Short<sup>448</sup> and Germaine Greer<sup>449</sup> wrote to 'disinherit/dispossess' themselves of the past. Author Shady Cosgrove<sup>450</sup> wrote to understand her family mythologies. For Cosgrove there was no memory of her father yet there were vivid memories of her longing for the absent father and playing the piano to fill the void. In a sense, my father was

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<sup>447</sup> George Orwell, *Collected Essays*, (London: Mercury Books, 1961), 425.

<sup>448</sup> Rendle-Short, Francesca, *Bite your Tongue*, (Australia: Spinifex, 2011).

<sup>449</sup> Greer, Germaine, *Daddy We Hardly Knew You*, (USA: Ballantine Books, 1989).

<sup>450</sup> Cosgrove, Shady, *She Played Elvis: A Pilgrimage to Graceland*, (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2007), 56-57.

also an absent father. Horace Lindrum was on tour for up to nine months of the year. Yet, curiously, miraculously, wonderfully, he was forever present in my life and still is. I have written to hold on to my family story, celebrate the lives of my forebears and express gratitude for my existence. Whether we write to dispossess ourselves of the past, understand the past or embrace the past, we are all of us keepers of the past. I would argue we can say goodbye to the past and/or learn to live with the past but there is no way of eradicating history from 'Being' because history is the lived experience of life. Writing history is simply catharsis; a purging of the emotions and an intertwining of the physical and the spiritual self through which the soul of the self emerges.

My first task in this project was to write up a family tree and then to wade through boxes of historical material in order to refresh my memory on those parts of the story that were familiar to me and to piece together the history of those parts of the story when I was not around. I began to read widely on the history of the cue sports and to review historical and contemporary texts. It was in the research phase that I became aware that the history of my family had been re-written post my father's death in 1974. There are a number of examples.

In *Walter Lindrum: The Phenomenon* (1998), author Andrew Ricketts, makes reference to my father and to other members of my family but focuses almost exclusively on my great-uncle Walter Lindrum thus giving the impression that there was only one champion of significance in the Lindrum family. Whilst Ricketts's text is essentially well-constructed and offers a useful insight into parts of the Lindrum family story, there are quite a few gaps. These may have arisen due to an over-reliance on information from one particular source, lack of knowledge on psychological factors and lack of access to resources believed to be scattered around the world when, in fact, there is a tome of information on the Lindrum family in storage in New South Wales.

As a consequence, there are occasions when Ricketts skims the surface on important issues, perhaps in an attempt to enhance a story that clearly glorifies Walter Lindrum. There is grave danger associated with skimming the surface as it is easy for a reader to form a false impression about people, places and events. Thus, I assert Ricketts misrepresents the story of many key figures in my family story, either by overestimating one person's performance or by focusing on a particular member's weaknesses without sufficient background or analysis. For example, Ricketts and other contemporary authors, such as J. W. Deacon, Peter FitzSimons and Evan Jones, are dismissive of and fail to reference my great-uncle Frederick III's achievements<sup>451</sup>. Aside from his world records at the billiard table, his achievements include *Spot End Billiards: Technique and First Principles* (1913) – a text that marks him as a leading authority on the sport of the 20th century. Rather they dwell harshly on the man's alcoholism without offering any explanation for it. Moreover, these authors imply that Frederick III's battle with alcoholism played a major role in prematurely ending his career. In fact, Frederick III was still playing elite billiards, raising huge sums of money for the needy and being dubbed by his brother Walter as his favourite playing partner when in his sixties.

What Ricketts fails to consider is there were a number of contributing factors to the onset of Frederick III's alcoholism in 1936, including: untreated post-traumatic stress syndrome and depression, the weight of parental and public expectation, poor self-esteem over being born a left-hander (The commonly held belief in that era was left-handers cavorted with the devil), the 'mysterious and unexplained' disappearance of his entry in the world professional billiards championship 1933 which prevented his participation – given he was the Australian champion, that must have been a major disappointment – the decision by John Wren to 'sponsor' his brother Walter,

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<sup>451</sup> There is no reference, for example, of my great-uncle Frederick III's nineteen wins against British billiard champion Melbourne Inman nor to newspaper clippings reporting: 'Walter Lindrum Again Beaten: Brother Fred Recovers Splendidly', *The Referee*, 1928, 16.

and – to ‘send a manager to England with Walter to organise an elaborate betting plunge’<sup>452</sup> – may have caused him professional embarrassment, the ruthless media attack over the stance he adopted against the slaughter of elephants for billiard balls – the death of his beloved wife Augusta in an horrific motor vehicle accident in South Melbourne when the vehicle in which she was a passenger was sandwiched between trams left him with the sole responsibility of raising an eight-year-old son, the loss of the Australian title which he had held for twenty-seven years to his nephew, adding pain to his own aging process and the subsequent perceived progressive decline in his performance.

The misrepresentation of Frederick III’s alcoholism and it being brought forward to 1912, is to re-write my great-uncle’s life and the Lindrum family history, discounting, as it does, Horace Lindrum’s win of the Australian professional billiards title against his uncle Frederick and thus devaluing Frederick and Horace’s records of achievement and creating an unreconcilable confusion which cannot be substantiated.

A number of critics, including Ricketts, refer to Walter Lindrum’s attempts at the Australian title in 1913 and 1916 and suggest Walter Lindrum didn’t play for the Australian professional billiards title after that because it was not important to him but there may be another reason why Walter refused to play his brother and his nephew. As Deacon points out: ‘Walter liked to be in control of the parameters of the contest...He was instinctively a gambler, but, as the consummate professional, appreciated having the odds in his favour.’<sup>453</sup> If we accept Deacon, then we must also accept, on the balance of probabilities, Walter refused to play his brother and nephew in competition because he hadn’t enjoyed losing to his brother in 1913 and 1916 and he knew, instinctively, his brother and nephew were equally as capable and he feared he might lose. In

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<sup>452</sup> Ricketts, *Walter Lindrum: The Phenomenon*, 61.

<sup>453</sup> Deacon, ‘Walter Lindrum: An Australian Sporting Hero’, 116.

fact, Walter Lindrum publicly refused to play his nephew for the title in 1932<sup>454</sup> – the same year of the ‘mysterious and unexplained’ disappearance of the entries of Frederick III and Horace in the world professional billiards title event. The reality is, Walter Lindrum never held the Australian title.

In *Everyone and Phar Lap* (1998) author Peter FitzSimons excludes any reference to Horace Lindrum. This exclusion and the exclusion of other family members, given the Lindrum family story is the story of a billiard playing aristocracy, are serious and disrespectful omissions that serve to sever vital links in a family chain and destroy the meaning and, indeed, the authenticity of the Lindrum family story. Similarly, in *Black Kettle and Full Moon: A Daily Life in a Vanished Australia*, historian Geoffrey Blainey references only one member; that is, Walter Lindrum. Aside from the obvious hurt these sorts of omissions cause to the direct descendants of the family, the focus on one member rather than on the whole story serves to dramatically reduce one hundred and nine years of remarkable and unique Australian sporting history. How can that possibly serve the national interest or achieve the core aim of the National Sports Museum in Melbourne which is ‘to preserve the rich history of sport in Australia’?

In a later volume, *Great Australian Sports Champions from Phar Lap to Freeman and From Cazaly to Waugh* (2006), FitzSimons references Walter Lindrum and Eddie Charlton. Again, there is no reference to Horace Lindrum. In *200 Years of Australian Sport* (1988), sportswriters Ian Head and Gary Lester make two short references to Horace Lindrum and eight references to Walter Lindrum, one of which is a dedicated full page with photo of Walter giving coaching hints to Donald Bradman, with the caption ‘Two Immortals of Australian Sport’.

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<sup>454</sup> *The Daily News*, Thursday August 4, 1932, ‘Will not play nephew. Billiards Star Up in Smoke. Come down from your ivory tower, Walter Lindrum.’ Retrieved from the family archive January 12, 2013. *The Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, ‘Would not play nephew’, Saturday December 30, 1933, 6.

The first reference to Horace states: 'In 1940 Horace Lindrum won the world snooker title.'<sup>455</sup> This statement is incorrect. Horace Lindrum won the world professional snooker title in 1951/52. Inclusion of the word 'professional' is important as there was a clear line between the professional and amateur leagues in the Lindrum era and a vast difference between the playing abilities of the professional and amateur exponents of the sport. This is probably the same today, although the lines in all sports have been somewhat blurred.

The second reference relates to Horace being the first snooker player to score one thousand snooker centuries. Whilst this entry is not technically incorrect, the significance of this achievement is overlooked. Horace Lindrum was the first player in history to make one thousand snooker centuries 'in public performance'. Lindrum made far more than a thousand snooker centuries during his career. This achievement is also significant because the great English champion Joe Davis, Horace's fiercest rival during the Golden Age of Snooker, fell far short of this record. Further, many of Lindrum's centuries were recorded in a world record time of 2 1/2 to 6 minutes on billiard tables with Kentfield-style pockets.<sup>456</sup>

There are a number of spectacular errors in the references to Walter Lindrum. For example, the statement 'Walter Lindrum won the world snooker

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<sup>455</sup> Head, and Lester, *200 Years of Australian Sport*, 180.

<sup>456</sup> Jonathan Kentfield was a superb British player who challenged himself by 'reducing the size of the pocket openings.' John Thurston established 'The House of Thurston' (billiard table and accessory manufacturers) in 1799 and, during the 19th century worked tirelessly on improving the frame (slate beds) and cushions (from horse hair to vulcanised rubber) and the general quality of billiard tables. John Carr of Bath is credited with inventing the 'twisting chalk' which increased friction. In 1868 John Wesley Hyatt of New York began making billiard balls out of cellulose and nitrate. This ball was the first commercially successful synthetic plastic which he called 'celluloid'. In 1869 Hyatt patented this composition and began marketing his 'Bonzoline' ball. By 1900 a similar ball was being produced in England under the name 'Crystalate'. These balls could be produced with more equal weight and were not subject to weather conditions. However, acceptance was very slow. Crystalate balls were not used in championship play until 1926 when they were adopted by the amateur league. The Crystalate ball was first used in professional competition in 1929. French Infantry man, Mingaud, is credited with introducing the leather cue tip in 1807.

title in 1929'<sup>457</sup> is false. Walter never won the world snooker title. A full page spread suggests Walter dominated his game and opponents as no other Australian sportsman has:

Probably only Bradman and the under-appreciated Heather Mackay even came close. Lindrum was king...Around Lindrum there was a dynasty of champion players – his father, his brother, his sister and nephew. Horace became a snooker player, but Walter was best. When he was seventeen, he was world master of billiards...<sup>458</sup>

It is true the Lindrums were a dynasty of champions but it is sad references to the equally impressive achievements of other members of the family are condensed to the barest of minimums or excluded altogether. Aside from the records at the billiard table, there is the impressive fundraising efforts of the family as a whole. The assertion that Walter was world master of billiards at seventeen is pure fabrication. It is impossible to know whether or not Walter was 'best' as, after defeat to his brother in 1916 and after defeating his nephew in 1928 (Walter being the 30-year-old seeded professional and Horace the 16-year-old newcomer), Walter refused to play either his brother or his nephew in competition for the Australian title. Further, as per the appendices to Ricketts's book, Frederick III was still notching up wins against his brother in his later years. I can but wonder whether authors stop to think how their writings will impact on a champion's descendants?

*The Makers of Australia's Sporting Traditions: Lives from the Australian Dictionary of Biography* (1993) is published by the Melbourne University but the credentials of the various contributors are not provided. Author, Evan Jones, references my great-uncles Frederick William Lindrum III (1888-1958) and Walter Albert Lindrum (1898-1960) as 'billiard prodigies and the only sons of

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<sup>457</sup> Head and Lester, *200 Years of Australian Sport*, 180.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid, 200.

Frederick William Lindrum, billiardist, and his wife, Harriet nee Atkins.’(Evan, 1997, 147) According to Jones:

Fred I arrived in Adelaide from Plymouth, Devon, England as a child in 1838, later established a vineyard at Norwood and was a hotelkeeper in Adelaide and at Victor Harbour. In 1862 he was a billiard-saloon proprietor and on 17 September, 1865, in Adelaide, the day his son was born, he defeated the visiting world champion, John Roberts, senior, presumably in a handicap match.<sup>459</sup>

My great-great-grandfather Friedrich Wilhelm Von Lindrum (F. W. Lindrum I) was born in Stralsund, Prussia in 1828. He came from Hamburg to Australia in 1849 as a passenger on the Princess Louise, arriving in Adelaide where he established a vineyard at the corner of Thomas and Edsall Streets, Norwood. In 1873 he was awarded Australia’s first International Gold Medal for South Australian shiraz at the inaugural celebrations for the London Wine Society at the Albert Hall. His Naturalisation Certificate lists his occupation as Wine Merchant. Prior to his death he was proprietor of the Crown Hotel in Victor Harbour (1876-1880) and, at the time of his death, he was a man of property.<sup>460</sup> Friedrich was buried as a national hero in the West Terrace cemetery, Adelaide (Originally Common Ground Road, path 36, allotment 22 east, now road 5, pathway 4, 2E, number 2225).

Taking into account the remarkable billiard-playing prowess of the Lindrum family I argue that the presumption about the match between Lindrum and Roberts as a handicap match is pure speculation. Lindrum came from a land of philosophers, musicians and mathematicians and, despite the fact that Roberts was deemed to be world master of billiards, it is within the

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<sup>459</sup> Evan Jones in *The Makers of Australian Sporting Traditions: Lives from the Australian Dictionary of Biography*, selected and edited by Michael McKernan, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1997), 147.

<sup>460</sup> The Commercial Inn in Grenfell Street (south side, west corner of Commercial Place, Adelaide. The Royal Oak Hotel, 1 Fifth Street, Ardrossan and a quarter acre plot, being Block 41 Edsall Street, about midway between Elizabeth Street and Sydenham Road.

realms of probability that Friedrich played an elite game and that the match was not on a handicap.

Referring to my great-grandfather Frederick II, Jones says:  
In 1886 he moved to Melbourne and next year won the native-born Australian championship. But by 1892 (in a pattern to be repeated by later Lindrums) he had sunk from the top competitive ratings.<sup>461</sup>

What pattern? Which Lindrums? Nothing but innuendo. The reality is, the bank crash came in 1893 and there were probably few opportunities for competitive play. Further, Jones fails to take into account the fact that my great-grandfather passed his knowledge of the sport onto his sons and to his grandson via the teaching methodologies he had inherited from his father, thus effectively playing a key role in the production of three elite world-class champions against whom few players in the world could match their skills.

Jones also tells the reader that my great-grandfather:  
spent peripatetic years at Donnybrook, Perth, Kalgoolie and Broad Arrow before moving to Sydney in 1909 and, finally, in 1912, to Melbourne. There, at 317 Flinders Lane, he ran the Lindrum billiard-hall until his death on 11 April, 1943.<sup>462</sup>

The Lindrums were still living in Sydney in 1912 and my great-grandfather was, at that time, the proprietor of the Classic Billiard Room on George Street. Lindrum's in Flinders Lane opened in 1921. Further, Lindrum's was a billiard room not a billiard hall. The terms 'billiard saloon' and 'billiard hall' bring with them connotations of a bar and the Lindrum billiard rooms were not bars. In fact, the Lindrum billiard rooms were established on the

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<sup>461</sup> Jones, *The Makers of Australian Sporting Traditions: Lives from the Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 147.

<sup>462</sup> Ibid, 147.

Harvey<sup>463</sup> principles: 'No gum. No alcohol. No gambling.' Drinking and gambling on-premise were strictly forbidden. Frederick III was manager of Lindrum's in Flinders Lane at the time of his father's death in 1943.

According to Jones, 'The elder son was obviously his father's first choice and he was trained for convenience as a right-handed player.' (Jones, 148) The reality is, Frederick III was ten years older than his brother Walter. He wasn't trained as a right-handed player for convenience. He was trained as a right-handed player because his father believed that left-handers cavorted with the devil.

This text purports to be and is promoted in academic circles as an important historical reference source yet phrases like 'Fred took to the drink' suggest it should be in the trashy comic book section of the library rather than on the history shelf. There is no reference to Frederick III's nineteen wins against British professional billiards champion Melbourne Inman or his unfinished world record break of 2,196 against George Gray, which, aside from British champion Tom Reece's marathon break against Joe Chapman (1904), remains the third highest recorded break at billiards of that era; my great-grandfather Frederick II having recorded a world record break of 3,000. Speaking of Walter, Jones says:

On [his] first tour [to England] Lindrum made sixty-seven of what his nephew Horace was to call with perhaps understandable pique his 'highly scientific but somewhat mechanical thousands at billiards.'<sup>464</sup>

The word 'pique' means resentment. During my extensive research into my family I found no evidence that Horace Lindrum was, at any time during

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<sup>463</sup> In the late 1870's, Englishman, Fred Harvey started the first restaurant chain in America along the Kansas Pacific Railroad, later approaching the Atcheson, Topeka & the Santa Fe. Circus in the *Golden era* also operated on Harvey principles.

<sup>464</sup> Jones, *The Makers of Australian Sporting Traditions: Lives from the Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 148.

his fifty year career, resentful of his uncles' achievements or the achievements of other exponents of his sport. To the contrary, there is an overwhelming body of evidence verifying Horace Lindrum spoke respectfully of his uncles and his fellow professionals, acknowledging their achievements and expressing gratitude for what he had learned from them and often critiquing his own abilities. The fact that he refused to become embroiled in match fixing and the politics of sport, preferring to become an exhibition player, says something of the nature of the man.

Jones concludes: 'Fred and Walter's sister, Violet, was also a skilled player. Her son Horace Norman William Morrell (1912-1974) changed his name to Lindrum and became a world snooker champion.' The inference here is that Horace Lindrum 'traded' off the name 'Lindrum'. No explanation is provided as to how and why Horace Morrell came to be known as Horace Lindrum yet the change of name was at the instigation of my great-grandfather and great-uncle Walter who thought it would be great publicity if another Lindrum entered the fold.

Turning now to *World Snooker with Jack Karnehm* (1981). It is as much what the authors say in this text as what they don't say. A British snooker commentator and one-time chairman of the governing body, Karnehm comes to the text with an aura of authority. In fact, it was during Karnehm's chairmanship of the governing body that Horace Lindrum became the first snooker player in history to record one-thousand snooker centuries in public performance. Karnehm's signature and the common seal of the governing body appear on the break certification. Yet, curiously, throughout this text, the authors write to destroy Horace Lindrum's record and reputation.

Crafted for a pop culture audience, Karnehm and Carty tell the reader: 'the new [snooker] scene owes nothing to Shakespeare or Ibsen, but drama it is

for all that.<sup>465</sup> Speaking of the changing face of snooker, Karnehm and Carty state:

By the year 1967, [British champion] Joe Davis had been in retirement for quite a long time and slowly snooker had slipped into the doldrums. Gone were the most glamorous days of the Leicester Square Hall. For the top remaining professionals – championship play had almost been forgotten.

Rex Williams, John Pulman, Fred Davis – between them – continued to keep a tight rein on the professional [players] association making it rather an exclusive club.<sup>466</sup>

The reader is left completely in the dark as to why the days of the Leicester Square Hall were so glamorous yet it was the Joe Davis and Horace Lindrum combination that made them so. Davis and Lindrum attracted huge crowds and big-named celebrities. According to Joy Lindrum, an eyewitness to events post World War II:

The Joe Davis and Horace combination provided a colourful contrast to the snooker scene. With Joe there was a determination and an aggressiveness of style, while the youthful exuberance of Horace presented an impish likable bearing. Both showman in their own way pioneered the game of snooker as did Peter Mans [Snr] and Freddie van Rensburg in South Africa, Clark McConachy in New Zealand, Conrad Stanbury, Clare O'Connell and George Chenier in Canada.<sup>467</sup>

Karnehm and Carty later assert it took Joe Davis most of his life to make a maximum break but today there about thirty players who have made the magic 147 at snooker. The inference is that the players today are superior to their predecessors. That may or may not be correct. We will never know the

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<sup>465</sup> Jack Karnehm and John Carty, *World Snooker*, (London: Pelham Books, 1981), 18-19.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>467</sup> Joy Lindrum, *Lindrums' World*, (Sydney: Self-published, 1998), 82.

answer. Certainly, contemporary sportspeople are the beneficiaries of revolutionary innovations but, insofar as billiards and snooker, the pocket openings on the billiard table in the Lindrum/Davis era were much smaller and there is no comparison between the highly mathematical and scientific texts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and contemporary texts. Further, the profile of the sport is not what it used to be which would seem to suggest regress rather than progress. Karnehm and Carty admit that they have heard people say times over, 'Did you see last night's game on the box? Well, if they are supposed to be top players, I am turning pro tomorrow; what a load of rubbish.'<sup>468</sup> The authors dismiss the criticisms saying, 'These statements are made by people who should know better, sometimes by enthusiasts just letting emotion take over.'<sup>469</sup> Certainly, these observations were made by the famous Whispering Ted Lowe compere of the "Pot Black" series in correspondence between himself and Joy Lindrum.

In Chapter Six entitled, 'Southern Star', the authors refer to professional exponent Pierrie Mans Snr. of South Africa but make no reference to Horace Lindrum yet Lindrum held the South African Record and recorded the first world record for the greatest number of snooker centuries ever recorded in a singular event at the Melbourne Town Hall in an International Challenge in 1948 against Pierrie Mans Snr. Ten centuries to Lindrum (100, 102, 101, 103, 105, 112, 123, 134, 135, and 141). Two centuries to Mans (101 and 108). A record certified by the governing body and recorded in 1948 during the International Challenge Championship.

In Chapter Seven, 'Australia: It's not all Kangaroos and Tubes', again there is no reference to Horace Lindrum yet Horace Lindrum was Australian professional billiards and snooker champion for over thirty-three years; a feat recognised by the Australian Association. Reference is made to Australian

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<sup>468</sup> Karnehm and Carty, *World Snooker*, 65.

<sup>469</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

champion Eddie Charlton who Karnehm and Carty hail as 'the cornerstone of the game in Australia.'<sup>470</sup> I would argue the Lindrum family were the foundation stone of the game in Australia.

In Chapter Twelve, 'The Canadian Experience', Karnehm and Carty desecrate Horace Lindrum's record, defiling his greatest achievement by reference to Vic Kirleuk who they assert was 'one of the best players in the dead days of the early sixties. Vic claims to have executed...over 2000 centuries.'<sup>471</sup> This reference is peculiar given there is no reference to the certificate executed by Karnehm on March 25, 1970, certifying Lindrum to be the first snooker player in history to record one thousand snooker centuries in public performance.

When Lindrum recorded his one-thousandth snooker century it was recognised as a significant milestone by a global media. Earlier milestones; 498th, 499th, 500th, 728th and 999th were also recognised. Horace's 500th century was recorded at the German Club in Pretoria, South Africa with three consecutive centuries in one session bringing his total to 502, including a break of 137 against D. Lombard, a century break against Captain Steyn van Rooyen and a break of 103 against Henry Jensen. Horace's 728th century was recorded in Virginia, South Africa with two breaks of 120 and 126 and his 999th century was recorded at Collaroy in the state of New South Wales. I could find no historical evidence nor on-line reference to a player by name of Vic Kirkleuk.

In Chapter Fourteen, 'Talking about Joe', two British players express their love for Joe Davis and assert none of the players during the Golden Age of Snooker came within a hundred miles of him. The inference is that Horace Lindrum's ability was nowhere near that of Joe Davis and that proposition is preposterous. The reality is Joe Davis and Horace Lindrum are to the history of

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<sup>470</sup> Karnehm and Carty, *World Snooker*, 73.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid, 63.

snooker what Federer and Nadal are to the history of tennis and that is a cause for celebration not denigration.

*A Sporting Nation: Celebrating Australia's Sporting Life* (1999) states:

Australia's first billiard [room] was opened in Sydney by Thomas Spencer in 1851, and arguably the game's greatest ever exponent has been Australia's Walter Lindrum. A more recent baize master is world open snooker champion Eddie Charlton. Lindrum was world champion billiard player from 1932-1950. He had soon outplayed all competition to the extent that he forced a change in the game's international rules, outlawing the nursery cannon technique by which he had set 57 world records.<sup>472</sup>

Eddie Charlton was runner-up in the new world title series for billiards and snooker. Walter Lindrum won the world professional billiards title 1933/34. The championship was not replayed until 1946 when it was won by Scottish Champion Walter Donaldson. Walter Lindrum did not compete.

Contemporary texts make no reference to Horace Lindrum's International and widely published bestseller *Snooker, Billiards & Pool*, a text which marks him as a leading authority on the cue sports of the 20th century. A further point of interest is Rudolph Brasch's *How did Sports Begin: The Origins of Man at Play*. First published in Australia by Longman in 1971, this edition references Horace Lindrum, his mother and Lindrums' billiard room in Pitt Street, Sydney. These references have been removed from subsequent texts published in Australia.

On May 5, 2010, Neil Robertson of Australia won the modern day world snooker title. This was a televised event transmitted by the BBC into lounge rooms across the world. At the conclusion of the event the compere proclaimed

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<sup>472</sup> Paul Cliff, editor, *Sporting Nation: Celebrating Australia's Sporting Life: The Australian Sporting and Dramatic News*, With contributions from Marlene Matthew, Eric Rolls and Marion Halligan, (ACT: the National Library of Australia, 1999), 45.

Robertson to be 'Australia's first world professional snooker champion', a claim presumably based upon the fictitious mythology that the 1951/52 championship of one hundred and forty-five frames of snooker was not a bona fide event.

Robertson responded, 'Yes, I believe I am the first Australian to win the title but Horace Lindrum's name is on the trophy.' Sydney journalist, Will Swanton, jumped to Horace's defence:

Imagine during the Super League war that only two teams stayed true to the Australian Rugby League. All those two teams could do was play one epic series to decide the champion. That's how Horace Lindrum became the world No. 1 in a marathon two-week play-off against New Zealand's Clark McConachy. It wasn't his fault almost everyone else was consumed by Super-League-style greed. Nowadays the British still try to discount the result but, at the time, the rebel players were branded 'The Bully Boys of Sport' by the British tabloids who called Lindrum and McConachy heroes for respecting the traditions of the game. Lindrum is listed as the official 1952 champion. [The governing body recognised the win by certification]. He raised hundreds of thousands of dollars during his 50-year career for charities, hospitals and schools. He paid his own way to play around the globe...<sup>473</sup>

Yet another fundamental error was made by an ABC newsreader in Sydney who referred to Hurricane Higgins as 'Snooker's first superstar.' Tragically, a break-neck mentality often results in the delivery of poorly researched material. Snooker's first superstars were Britain's Joe Davis and Australia's Horace Lindrum.

In the *Historical Dictionary of Australia* (2015), the following reference to my great-uncle Walter Lindrum appears:

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<sup>473</sup> Will Swanton, "Only Eye Doctor Knew Amazing Secret of previous Australian to win World Title", *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 5, 2010, Sports Day, 22. [www.smh.com.au/.../only-eye-doctor-knew-amazing-secret-of-previous-australian-champion-to-win-world-title-20100504-u77u.html](http://www.smh.com.au/.../only-eye-doctor-knew-amazing-secret-of-previous-australian-champion-to-win-world-title-20100504-u77u.html).

Walter Lindrum..was a billiard player, one of the most successful ever, with 57 world records to his credit, many of them unbroken long after his death. During the mid-1920's Lindrum's mastery of the game in Australia was such in Australia that many players refused to play against him and he sought competition overseas. His record break of 4,137 was made in a match he lost against Joe Davis in London on 19 January, 1932, a feat that precipitated a change in the rules of the game. Lindrum won the World Professional Billiards Championship in 1933 and 1934 which he held until his retirement in 1950.<sup>474</sup>

There are a number of problems with this entry. Firstly, there is no reference to other equally talented members of the Lindrum family thus severing vital links in the family chain. Secondly, no explanation is provided for the change in the rules of the game. The reader is thus likely to assume that the rules were changed due to Walter's overall domination of the sport rather than because of a breach in the 'Fair Play' principle. Finally, Walter won the world professional billiards championship 1933/34. War prevented competition until 1949 when Scottish professional Walter Donaldson won the title. Clark McConachy was the world professional billiards champion in 1952 when he competed against Horace Lindrum for the world professional snooker title.

Some twenty years ago, I found myself deeply and profoundly affected by my mother's efforts to keep our family story together and the extraordinary level of care she had taken over so many years to preserve the Lindrum record. This was no mean feat. The material evidence is substantial. In the course of this work I interviewed my mother and she shared many stories of growing up in England and her burning desire to become an actress. War robbed her of that opportunity and impacted upon her life and the lives of her family. During World War II she was stationed in Hut 4 at Bletchley Park where the British broke the Nazi enigma coding system. My mother's name is inscribed in the Bletchley book incorporating the names of those who were stationed at

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<sup>474</sup> Norman Abjorensen and James C. Docherty, *Historical Dictionary of Australia*, (New York and London: Rowman & Littlefield and Lanham & Boulder, 4th edition, 2015).

Bletchley and her efforts were recognised by Prime Minister David Cameron in May, 2010.

After the war mother accepted a position as organising secretary for the British Association and Control Council; the governing body. This role brought her into contact with the leading professionals of the day. She met my father for the first time on January 1, 1946. During the interview, my mother also shared with me details of her travels – driving thousands of miles through Africa in the 1950s – and her role as ambassadress, manager, writer, wife and mother. Listening to her I could only marvel at her extraordinary life.

Whilst I dealt with the history alone by rigorously following the family story back through archives, research materials and oral histories, I also had to negotiate a number of other factors which detracted from a subjective viewpoint. As I have stated in my introduction and conclusion to this dissertation, being the daughter of a famous parent is fraught with difficult emotions which sometimes cloud biographical objectivity. As Cosgrove, Modjeska and Varga have said: the role of the child is a complex one through which the mapping of a parent's life can sometimes efface the child's. While this was not the case in my writing, there were times when Horace, and my responsibility to his memory, felt burdensome and constricting.

I wanted to record my father's life in a balanced way which located him in an appropriate history. The problem for a daughter who has had a good relationship with her parents is that research follows not in the same way that a removed historian might approach such a task. At times I found myself both freed and imprisoned by the writing process. I overcame this by adopting a methodological search, carefully planning the journey back to the past and mapping the way forward, observing historical facts, using my imagination to immerse myself in the worlds that existed before I was born and reflecting upon the memories I carry of people and events.

I was not blind to the fact that my father's life may have played out differently if he had not inherited from his mother such a strong ethical and moral framework. He was presented with the opportunity to make a vast amount of money through competition sport. He chose instead to entertain people. For those for whom asset building is a priority that decision will be viewed as a poor one.

The lives of others may also have turned out differently if my father had been around more frequently. I say this because the first trait of a good father is the ability to measure discipline which is known to be an essential to character building. It is never easy to bring up children on your own yet many mothers shoulder this responsibility. Children reared in this circumstance frequently make an early transition to adulthood. Problems can arise for parent and child when children are unprepared to shoulder the responsibilities attached to such a transition.

The result of my endeavours, the biography *The Uncrowned King* is a crafted reflection of fact; a philosophical and frank account of my father's life. Like the Boab tree, a family story draws on its own resources to reshape itself. To a great extent, I drew upon events I viewed with the naked eye but, in weaving together the fascinating array of stories of those who crossed paths with Horace on his journey through time, I stepped into history and engaged with my imagination. As my father was a historical figure, his story is a bildungsroman; a story which charts his womb to tomb journey in the cultural setting of his life from a public and personal perspective drawing, as it does, from the extensive resource currently in storage.

Fame is attained in the most unexpected ways.  
A man might spend his life in the service of an ideal  
but this is completely forgotten. And yet, one feature,  
least expected, might immortalise him.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> Rudolph Brasch, *How did Sports Begin? A Look at the Origins of Man at Play*, (Australia: Collins Publishers, 5th edition, 1989), 189.

The distinguishing feature of *The Uncrowned King* was Horace's preparedness to put the interests of the Other before gratification of the self. Love thy neighbour is the hallmark of a true champion.

## Conclusion

This dissertation has examined the sporting hero, their role in the national identity and the relationship between the biography writer and their subject with a special focus on what authorship means to a writer with a close personal relationship with the subject. I drew extensively on my Lindrum family history as it was chronicled in documents in the family archive and also as I remembered family stories through conversations and memories. My story has a particular potency, I argued, because I felt my subject – my father – hadn't been served well by historians or sports writers. In part, the writing of the dissertation became a kind of quest; to right the wrongs of historical representation, and to tell the 'true' story.

In writing this I realise that such a statement is in itself a kind of fabrication. As I have shown throughout the dissertation, histories are fragmented things, where truth can be defined by which side you are on, how old you are and what you recall of your times. I was a child at the peak of my father's fame and I grew up surrounded by his victories. I was proud to be associated with such a man, yet I also felt weighed down by the responsibility this entailed. How could I ever write my father's life story and maintain my own objectivity?

Throughout this dissertation I have attempted to answer this question in two ways: Firstly, I wrote my father's memoir as honestly and diligently as I could. In doing so I was aware that the creative work, my story, might become a hagiography; a golden representation of a far from perfect era. I wanted to capture the trials and tribulations of what it meant to be Australia's leading billiards-playing family from 1865 to 1974. This needed to be wrought from the lived experience of my family and me. In writing the memoir, I created as flawed and honest a story as I could, remaining as true to history as was possible but also deferring to the pitfalls in the process.

My accompanying exegesis – “Family, Nation, Sport: Writing *The Uncrowned King*” – addressed these inherent dilemmas in a more historical and theoretical way, and drew on a range of scholars, writers and historical figures to explore the ways in which sporting biographies have been crafted over the decades of Australia’s sporting culture. The dissertation comprises four chapters, three of which offer a wider conversation about biography. The final chapter examines my role as a daughter, biographer and observer. In it I gathered the personal into my historical reflections on the life of the Lindrums.

In Chapter One, “Subjectivity, Objectivity and the porous boundaries between fact and fiction”, I examined the traditional principles of writing biography, arguing that new cultural factors can influence the ways in which we write a life. I asserted that if we accept truth is aligned with wisdom and, therefore, not a ‘floating currency’ but something upon which we rest the integrity of our lives and the well-being of our nation then we must also accept that there is more to be learned from concrete experienced reality than from distortion and disfiguration. I showed that while we perceive the world of experience in our own unique ways, writing the life of another person – and especially a public figure such as Horace Lindrum – brings with it responsibilities that transcend everyday experience. It requires the author to commit to the Other in order to shine a light on and into the world. The author in this circumstance can be a dreamer, imaginer, rememberer but what he/she must not be is a liar. Words are important, they need to be used with care as bad language has the potential to infect the mind in the same way a range of reproductive toxins can infect the physical person causing harm to self and subject which, in turn, negatively impacts our whole society.

In Chapter Two, “National Stories”, I considered the role biography plays in formulating the national story. The large landmass of Australia, with its

still comparatively small population, remains, two hundred years after British settlement, a fascinating and fragile space. On the one hand there is a need to populate the country. On the other, a need to be concerned for the vulnerability of our environment, climate change and limited resources so as to ensure we can provide shelter, food and water to our people. Early settlers faced considerable hardships of this sort but over the last century and more particularly post World War II, the greater mass of Australians – notwithstanding the ongoing gap in health, education and other social indicators faced by Indigenous people – have lived a largely privileged life when compared with people in other parts of the world.

In terms of its citizens, I asserted that Australia has produced some interesting characters and some outstanding personalities. Perhaps stars come no brighter than they did in the 20th century when tennis champion Rod Laver was ranked number 1 in the world for seven consecutive years (1964-1967), swimmer Murray Rose became the first male swimmer to win two freestyle events since Johnny Weismuller in 1924 and Cathy Freeman became the first ever Aboriginal Commonwealth Games gold medalist (1990) and, later, Olympic champion in the women's 400 metres at the Sydney Olympics (2000).

My family played a unique role in this sporting and cultural history of Australia (c. 1865-1974) and are remembered for their quite remarkable pioneering achievement. My growing fascination with that rich past, with all its glory and all its tragedy, all its ups and all its downs, gave birth to *The Uncrowned King*.

In Chapter Three, "The Australian Sporting Hero", I examined the complex concept of the sporting hero, cultural shifts in sport and the evolution of the new sporting model. A number of conclusions flowed from this chapter but the most important seems best summarised in a quote from the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer:

Our true reality is in our identity and unity with all life.  
This is a metaphysical truth which may become spontaneously realised under circumstances of crisis...The hero is the one who has given his physical life to some order of realisation of that truth. The concept of love your neighbour is to put you in tune with this fact.<sup>476</sup>

For me the 'truth' came in a grab for the Lindrum name for a hotel in Melbourne, which ultimately led to my putting pen to paper. Through this enterprise I discovered the meaning of the word 'sport' has new meaning and I found I had empathy with sports historian Paul Gallico's description of sport as:

a wonderful, chaotic universe of clashing colour, temperaments, and emotions, of brave deeds performed sometimes against odds seemingly insuperable, mixed with mean, shameful acts of pure skulduggery, cheapness, snide tricks, filth, and greed, moments of sheer, sweet courage and magnificence when the flame of the human spirit and the will to triumph burned so brightly that it choked your throat and blinded your eyes to be watching it...<sup>477</sup>

Also, I came to realise there is a hero inside each of us. Perhaps the greatest challenge is getting that hero to surface long enough to take on those who determine how history is represented. I assert greater awareness of the importance of taking personal responsibility is critical as is the need for reflection on the damage occasioned by the subversion of Socratic principles. Restoring the Humanities to its once hallowed pedestal is paramount as all fields of human enterprise flourish when the arts of 'thinking' and 'listening' are held in high regard. These arts lie at the root of the unconditional respect that attaches to the dignity of personhood principle.

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<sup>476</sup> Campbell, *The Power of Myth* with Bill Moyers, 138.

<sup>477</sup> Booth and Tatz, *One-Eyed: A View of Australian Sport*, Prologue, xi.

Chapter Four, 'Writing *The Uncrowned King*', brought me full circle. In reviewing contemporary sporting texts I was forced to confront distortions of the traditional principles of biography through the prism of my own family story. As my father's eldest daughter and, in my father's name, in this chapter I asked those who will write my family story in the future to stop and think before they put pen to paper.

I argued that how the Lindrum family story is recorded is important not only to me and to my family but in terms of the wider story of the nation: firstly, because the stories we tell – in the home, school, parliament – determine how we will be remembered; and secondly, because when 'heroes travel outward and eventually come to the centre of their own existence, they can only be at one with the world if truth stands at the threshold.'<sup>478</sup> This is because the self's capacity to be at peace with the self and live in harmony with others is predicated upon the ability to listen and communicate effectively and upon the capacity to speak frankly and honestly. When we lie we set in train false beliefs and, 'if we act on those beliefs, we end up doing foolish things.'<sup>479</sup> The well-being of a nation and its people thus rests on individuals taking personal responsibility to foster the virtues and uphold moral, legal and ethical frameworks.

As Joseph Campbell said:

The modern hero, the modern individual...must not, wait for his community to cast off its slough of pride, fear, rationalised avarice, and sanctified misunderstanding.

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<sup>478</sup> Campbell, *The Power of Myth* with Bill Moyers, 151.

<sup>479</sup> Rachels, James and Rachels, Stuart, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 5th edition by Stuart Rachels, (Boston, BurrRidge, IL, Dubuque, IA, Madison, WI, New York, San Francisco, St. Louis, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Lisbon, London Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Montreal, New Delhi, Santiago, Seoul, Singapore, Sydney, Taipei, Toronto: McGraw Hill, 2007), 179.

‘Live,’ Neitsche says, ‘as though the day were here. It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse. And so every one of us shares the supreme ordeal – carries the cross of the redeemer – not in the bright moments of his tribe’s great victories, but in the silences of his personal despair.’<sup>480</sup>

Horace Lindrum’s career was marred by war and controversy. The boycott of the world professional snooker title in 1951/52 led to his decision to become an exhibition player. That decision brought much joy to audiences across the globe. It also appears to have isolated him from mainstream sporting histories. This omission is the source of my personal despair.

What has been the key revelation of my research? Sport, no matter the field of human enterprise, needs to be played on an even playing field with participants adhering to the ‘Fair Play’ principle. Upholding moral, ethical and legal and transparent frameworks is critical to progress. Admittedly, family / national stories are loaded with mythologies and multiple subjectivities but truth still needs to be served. Our respect for truth is paramount. Both truth and the need to fight for truth should be paramount to our way of life. While new historicism and creative non fiction now walk closely with historical fiction, as a descendant of a great man, and the inheritor of his story, I am motivated to write what must be the truth to me. As Horace Lindrum said:

Whatever stroke you are going to attempt, the desired result will depend first upon how you handle your cue [pen]. There is nothing like watching a good player [biographer] to help one in forming good habits, but anybody who has watched a number of leading professionals will realise that there can be no hard and fast rules about correct stance, or

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<sup>480</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 337.

how to hold the cue [how to write the story]. The player's individuality and habit in such matters make up a part of a part of his [her] style.<sup>481</sup>

[This said] There is too much merely careless play, and I think it is a great mistake, for instance, to ignore penalties for fouling. There is nothing unfriendly about observing the rules of the game.<sup>482</sup>

Too many amateurs continue year after year to knock the balls about [bandy words/history] without giving any intelligent thought or effort to improving their play...the gulf between standards of play is due almost entirely to the professional's patient practice and concentration. What is a game to the [moneymaker] is a life's work to the [scholar/master craftsman].<sup>483</sup>

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<sup>481</sup> Lindrum, Horace, *Billiards and Snooker for Amateurs*, (London: Isaac Pitman & Sons Limited, 1948), 9.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid, 5 and 6.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid, 6.

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Horace Lindrum's widow and my mother, Joy Lindrum – 1996-2009.

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## **Appendices**

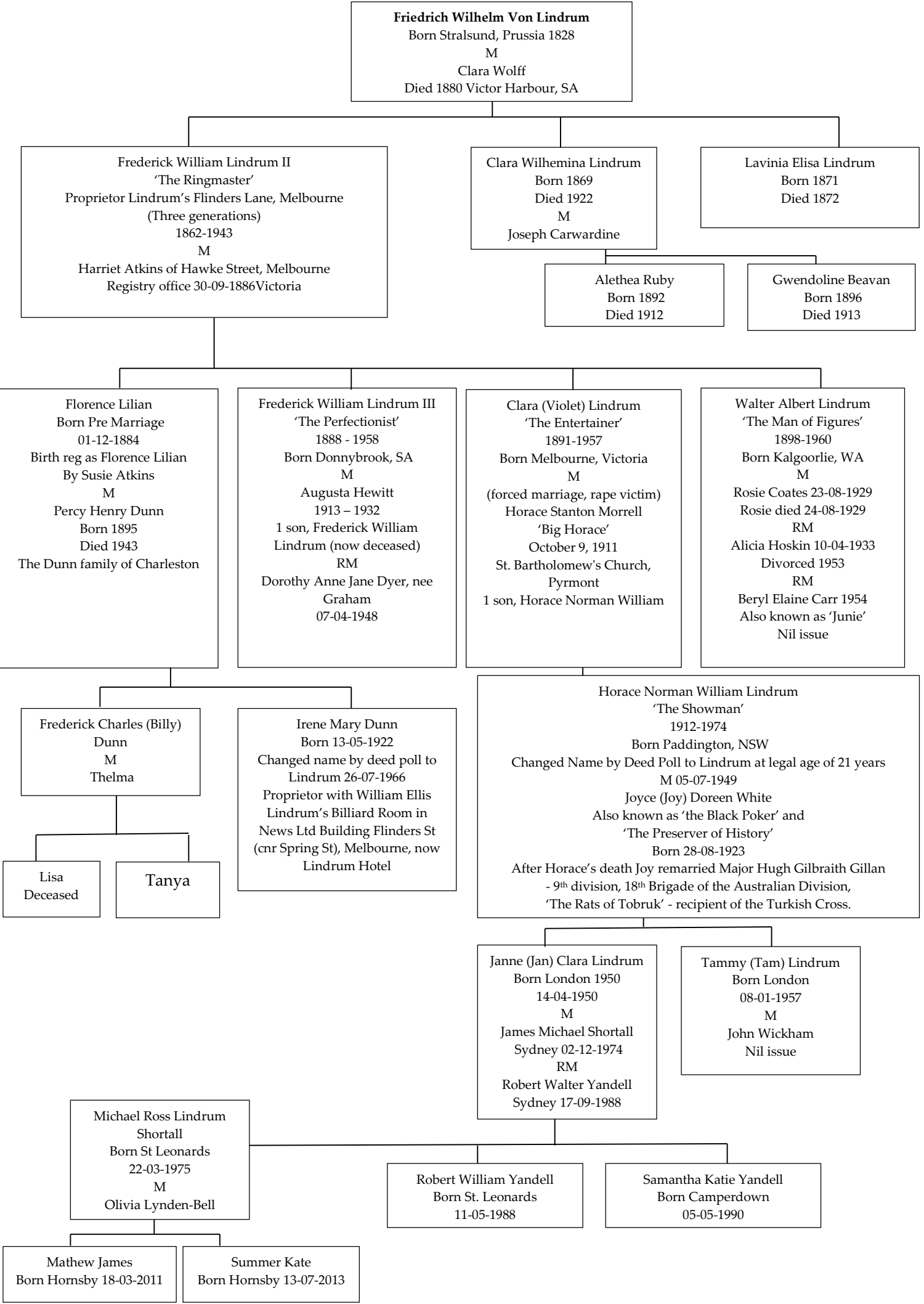
Family Tree

Photo Album

Summary of Horace Lindrum's achievements

Demonstration shots

LINDRUM FAMILY TREE



## PHOTO GALLERY



**AUSTRALIA'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL GOLD MEDAL FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SHIRAZ AWARDED TO FRIEDRICH WILHELM VON LINDRUM AT THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF FINE ARTS, LONDON, 1873.**



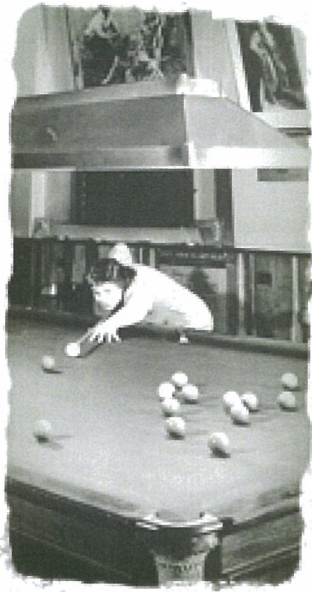
**Horace**  
The Showman  
1912-1974

**Walter**  
The Man of Figures  
1898-1960

**Frederick II**  
The Tutor  
1865-1943

**Frederick III**  
The Perfectionist  
1888-1958





CLARA VIOLET LINDRUM  
MOTHER OF HORACE LINDRUM



**BROTHERS, FREDERICK III AT THE TABLE AND WALTER ALBERT  
LOOKING INTO THE LENS**



**HORACE LINDRUM**  
**'THE UNCROWNED KING'**



## FIRST INTERNATIONAL TOUR NEW GUINEA 1935

### HORACE LINDRUM

by H. S. MARSHALL

**H**AILING from the Antipodes, Horace Lindrum comes of a line of billiards and snooker champions and may be said to have billiards in his blood. His most illustrious relative is, of course, his uncle, the famous Walter Lindrum, who first appeared in the world's professional billiards championship in 1923 when he defeated Joe Davis. Walter Lindrum is considered to be the finest billiards player of all time and amongst his notable achievements are eleven breaks of 1,000 and over in a game of two weeks, and a score of 100 in twenty-six seconds. Another uncle, Fred Lindrum, Junr., has been Australian billiards champion for twenty-seven years.

Just as Joe Davis has popularised the game of snooker in this country, Horace Lindrum has done similar service in Australia, and he has won the Australian professional snooker championship ever since its inception.

Horace had his first experience of the game as a schoolboy, practising assiduously under the watchful eye of his grandfather, Fred Lindrum, Senr., himself a player of no mean prowess. The young man made his first break of 100 in billiards and also in snooker when he was sixteen, and three years later he played and beat Frank Smith, Jr., then Australian snooker champion.

At twenty-one years of age Horace played his Uncle Fred for the Australian billiards title and won, achieving three breaks of over 1,000 in a week's play and winning by a margin of 9,000 points.

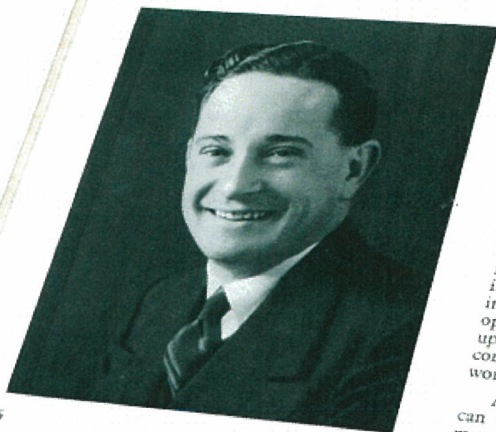
His career as a professional began in 1935 when he made a tour of New Guinea, being the first visiting sportsman to this hot and humid island. His Melanesian mission appears to have been successful, for, in his own words, "I raised enough money to come to England." His anxiety to reach the Mother Country may be judged by the fact that, returning from the land of head-hunters and cannibals on a Saturday, he was off to "Merrie" England on the following Monday morning. And in England Horace has not done so badly. He has participated in five World Snooker Championships and has been finalist on four occasions.

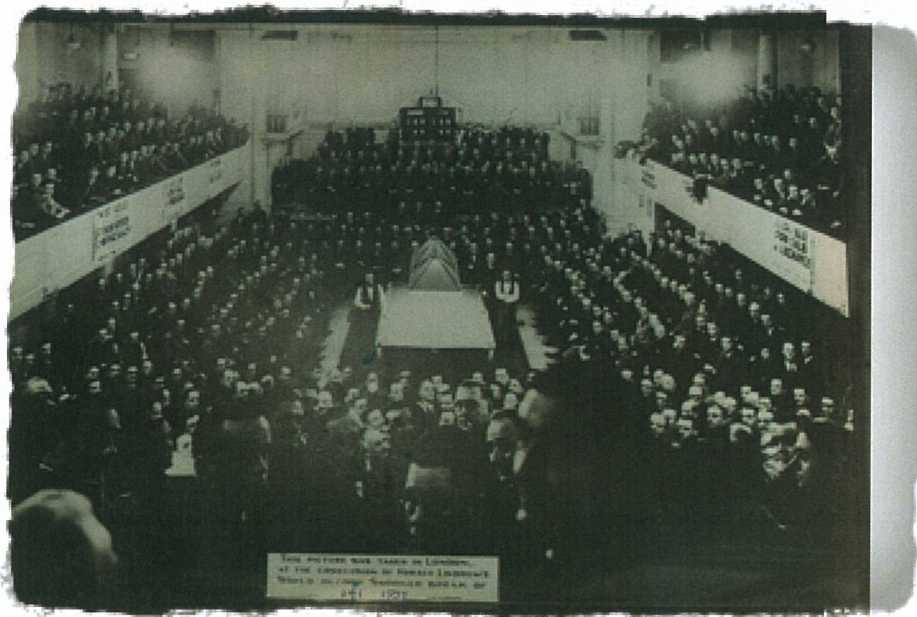
During his stay here from 1935 to 1939 he achieved the highest snooker break that has ever been made in unofficial match play, viz., 141 which consisted of 12 reds, 12 blacks, 3 reds, 3 blues and all the colours. This happened at Manchester before an audience of 1,000 people, playing against World Champion, Joe Davis. The Scottish Billiards Record made under baulk line rule 1008 is another feather in his cap.

Horace's bridge hand always attracts particular notice. His fingers are double jointed, a fact which in his younger days enabled him to become an outstanding exponent of the game of marbles, from which pastime he says that he has gained considerable knowledge of positional playing in snooker.

Billiards and snooker do not absorb the whole of Horace Lindrum's time. He is keen on bowls, golf, tennis and swimming, although he is not boasting that he has won any medals in the pursuit of these sports. Horace's career, like that of millions more of our fine young men, suffered interruption in World War II. He served for six years as a sapper in the Australian Army, during which he had no opportunities for competitive play but he is picking up nicely, thank you; and in the cheerful and confident young Aussie the redoubtable Joe has a worthy and perhaps dangerous opponent.

At the time of going to press—Horace Lindrum can claim a record of 182 breaks of a century or more at snooker and approximately 15 breaks of 1,000 in billiards.





**1937  
HORACE LINDRUM  
FIRST WORLD RECORD SNOOKER  
BREAK OF 141**



**TROPHY PRESENTED TO HORACE  
LINDRUM  
BY G. H. LUPTON & CO. IN  
RECOGNITION  
FIRST WORLD RECORD BREAK OF  
141**

## FIRST TRIP TO INDIA



Horace Lindrum played for the Maharaja of Jaipur in 1937.

The Maharaja was so impressed by his performance that he removed his shirt studs and cuff links and handed them to Mr. Lindrum, saying:

'Mr. Lindrum, I am in absolute awe of your skill, please accept this token of my appreciation. Now, if you will excuse me, I must change my shirt'.



## HORACE LINDRUM

THE MAGICIAN OF THE SNOOKER WORLD.

Some of his Achievements during  
English Season, 1936.

Billiard Break - 1008

Snooker Breaks

6 over 100 including one of 131

In one Evening's Exhibition, and it must be  
a record, he made a 300 break at Billiards,  
and in Three frames of Snooker he made a  
70 break in each frame.

The "Daily Mail" says Lindrum's Snooker is worth travelling  
miles to watch.

You have not seen Snooker unless you have seen the Wizard.

The Clubs are full of prizes, and the pleasure it gives the  
Members to see Horace Lindrum play.

## Great Billiard and Snooker Tour



HORACE LINDRUM  
Magician of Snooker.

BY  
HORACE LINDRUM  
AND  
MELBOURNE INMAN



MELBOURNE INMAN (Ex Billiards Champion)  
Winner of "Daily Mail" Gold Cup, 1936.

Billiards and Snooker  
EXHIBITIONS.

One Hour's Billiards.

Two or Three Frames of  
Snooker and Exhibition of  
Fancy Strokes.

Applications for Terms and Bookings should be addressed to:-

MELBOURNE INMAN,

"CRAIGMOR," PRINCETON, N.S.W.

Since this Pamphlet has been issued

## HORACE LINDRUM

HAS COMPILED THE WORLD'S

## Two Biggest Breaks at Snooker

141 and 135

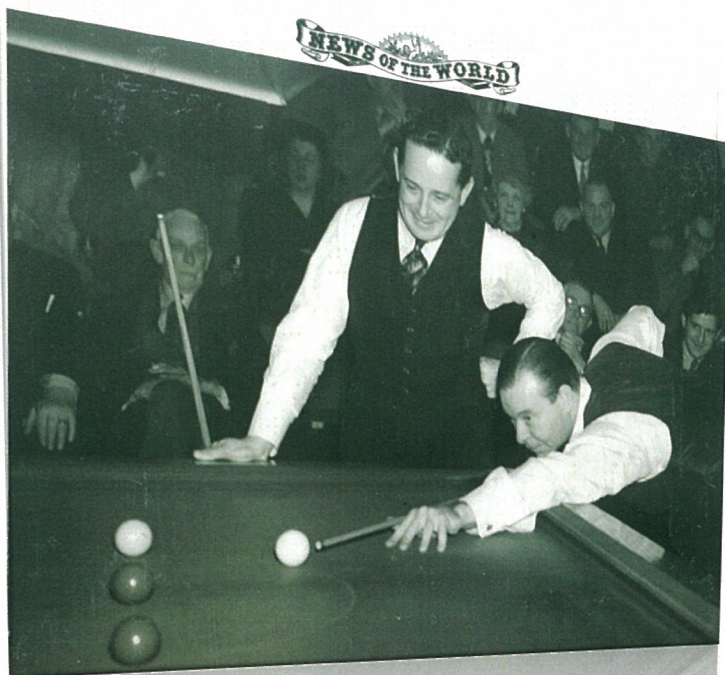
Horace Lindrum and Melbourne Inman  
were on tour in Europe prior to the outbreak of World War II.

News of War reached them in Aden.

Inman returned to England. Horace Lindrum returned to Australia where he joined  
the Royal Australian Engineers as a Sapper and opened his billiard room in  
Pitt Street, Sydney to the armed services for recreational purposes.



AFTER THE WAR, HORACE LINDRUM RETURNED TO LONDON AND HIS TOOK UP HIS GLOBETROTTING.



**TWO OF THE GREATEST SNOOKER PIONEERS  
OF ALL TIME:**

**JOE DAVIS OF ENGLAND**

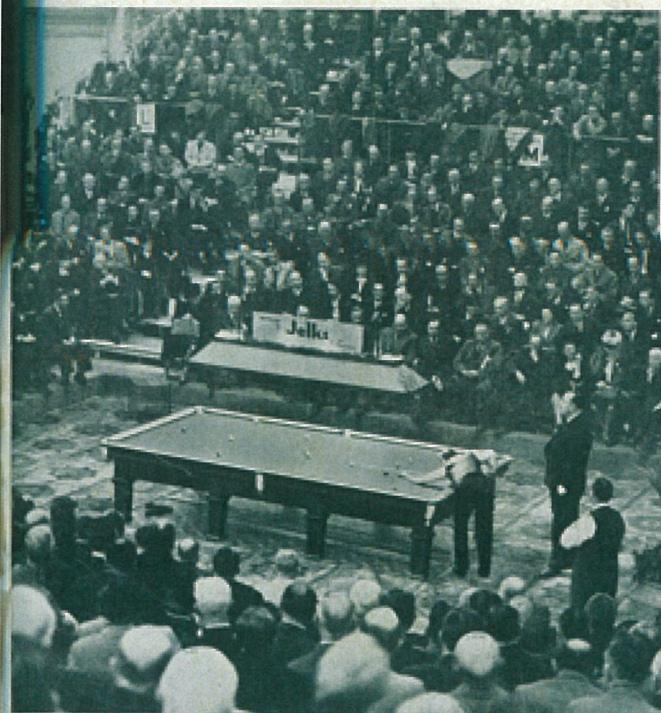
**HORACE LINDRUM OF AUSTRALIA**



**HORACE LINDRUM AND JOE DAVIS AT THE  
ROYAL HORTICULTURAL HALL, LONDON –  
1946**

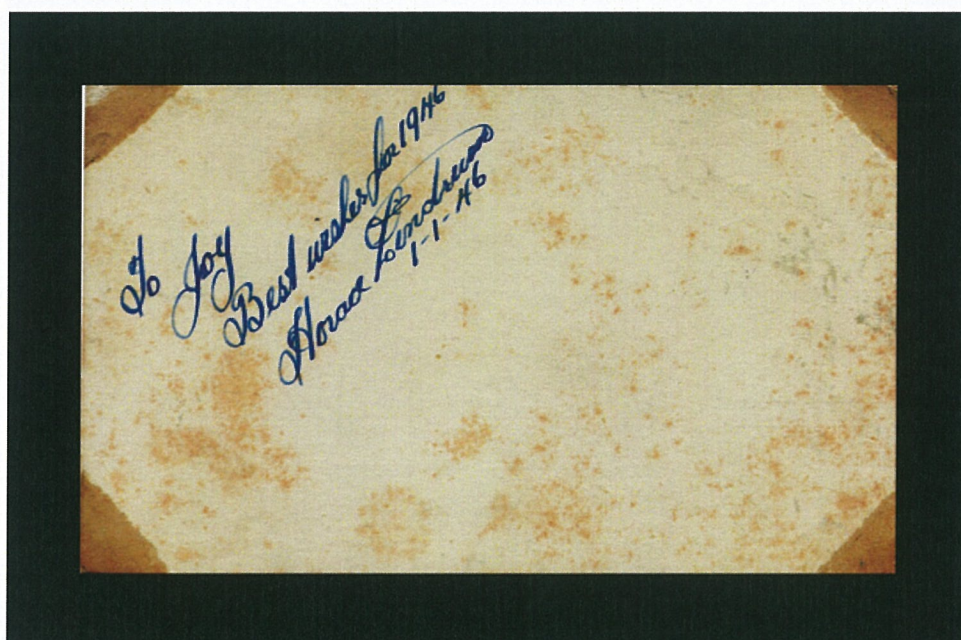


THE I.A. & C.C. WORLD PROFESSIONAL  
*Snooker Championship*

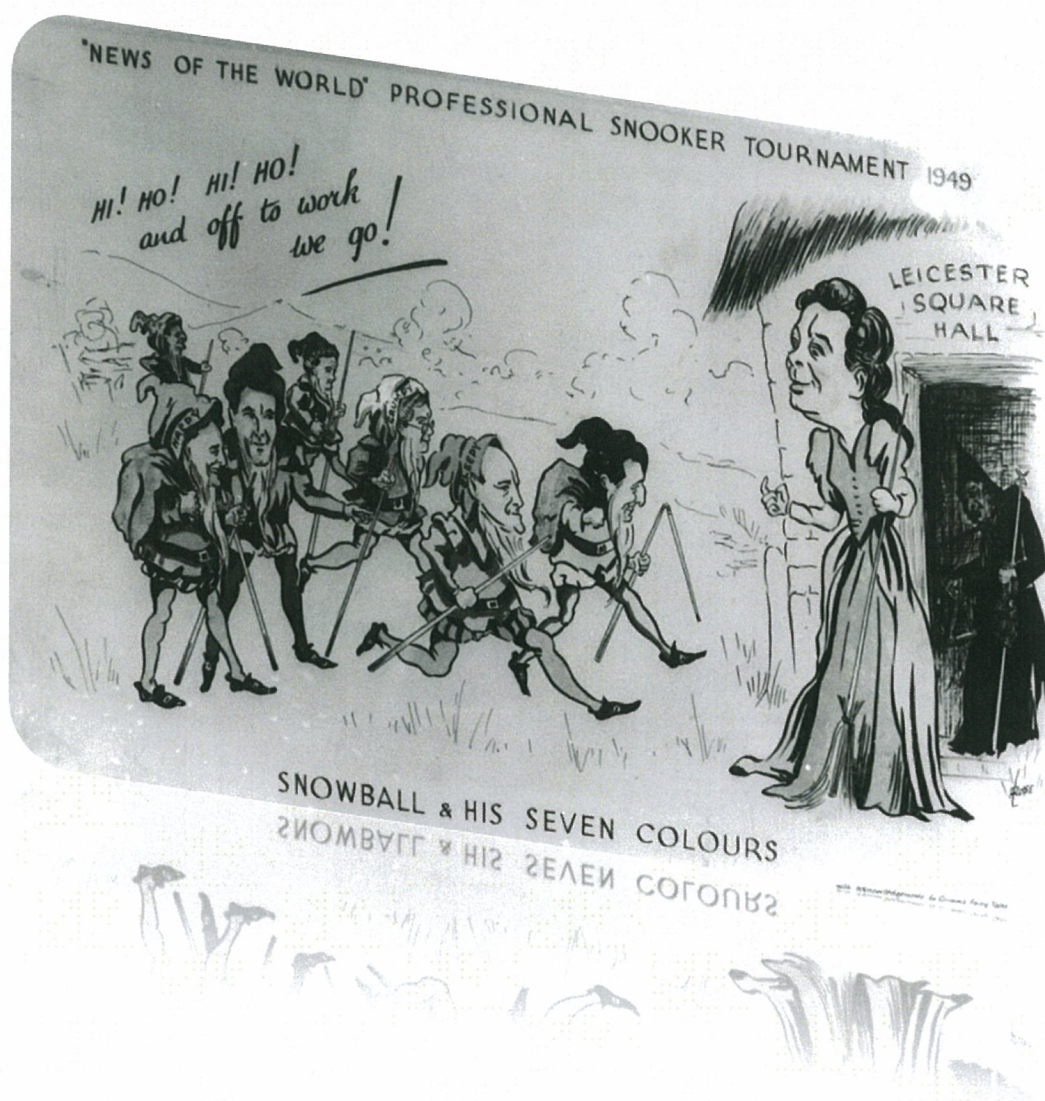


JOE DAVIS (England) v HORACE LINDRUM (Australia)  
PLAYING IN THE WORLD PROFESSIONAL SNOOKER CHAMPIONSHIP 1924  
AT THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL HALL, WESTMINSTER  
THE FINAL WAS BRILLIANTLY ORGANISED BY MR. BOB JELKS

**AUTOGRAPH GIVEN BY HORACE LINDRUM TO JOY  
WHITE AT THE FINAL IN 1946**



**JOE DAVIS AS SNOWBALL**  
**HORACE LINDRUM AS HAPPY**



NOV. 10 TH.

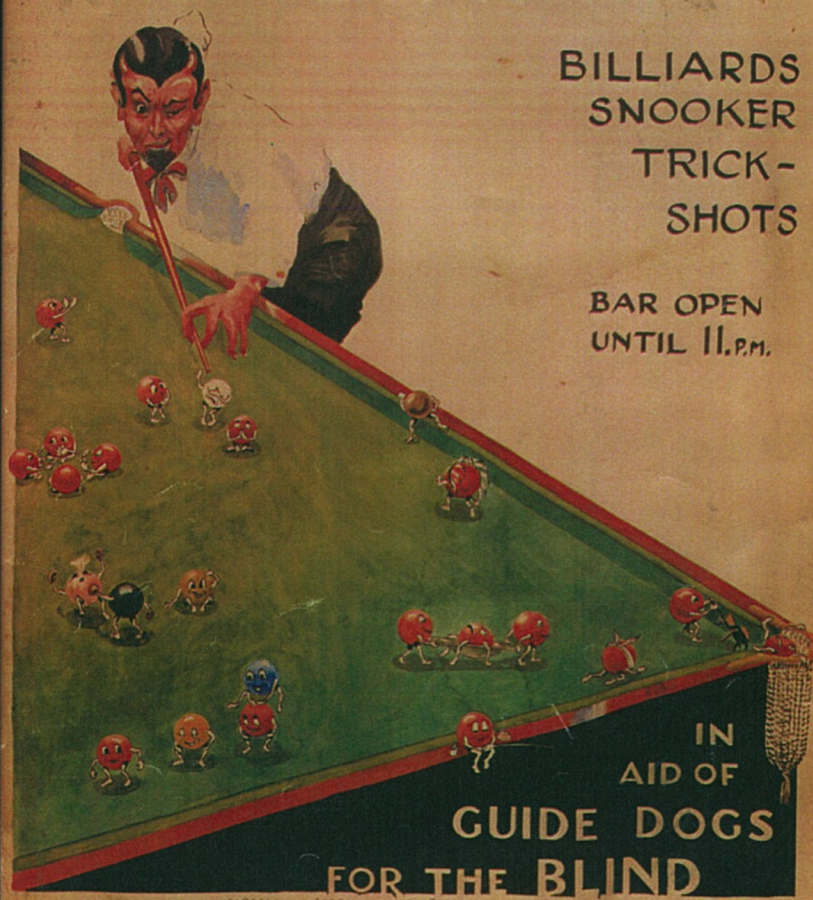
7-30. P.M.

HORACE LINDRUM.

HERBERT HOLT

BILLIARDS  
SNOOKER  
TRICK-  
SHOTS

BAR OPEN  
UNTIL 11 P.M.



IN  
AID OF  
GUIDE DOGS  
FOR THE BLIND

POST WAR  
BIG PROFESSIONAL MATCH SEASON  
**BILLIARDS — SNOOKER**  
**1948**



*HORACE LINDRUM IN ACTION.*

**LINDRUM SOUVENIR BROCHURE**

## **FILM STAR, VALERIE HOBSON**

**PATRONESS OF THE WOMEN'S GAME  
WITH JOY WHITE (LATER JOY LINDRUM) ORGANIZING SECRETARY OF THE  
BRITISH BILLIARDS ASSOCIATION AND CONTROL COUNCIL.**



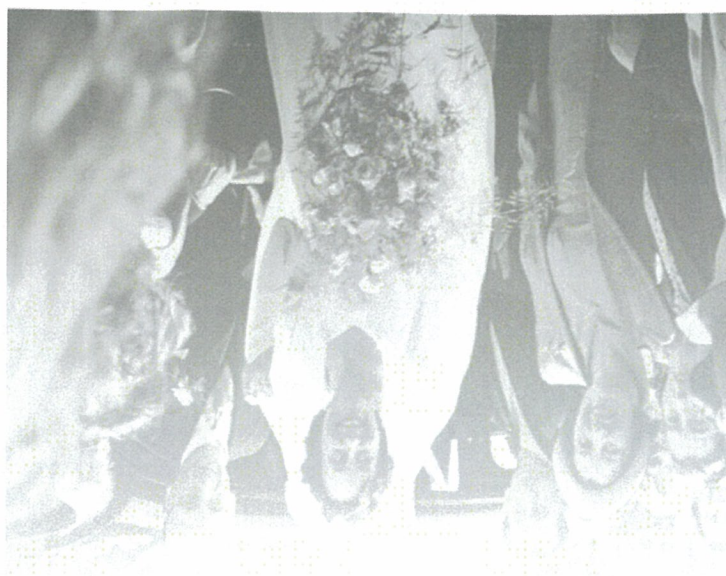
**ENGAGEMENT FRONT PAGE NEWS**  
**SNOOKER CHAMPION,**  
**HORACE LINDRUM TO MARRY JOY WHITE**



**HORACE LINDRUM** WITH HIS **BEST MAN,**  
**WHISPERING TED LOWE** OF POT BLACK FAME  
BEING FILMED BY THE BBC PRIOR TO THE WEDDING CEREMONY



**JOY WHITE ARRIVES AT  
ST. MARTINS-IN-THE FIELDS, TRAFALGAR  
SQUARE FOR HER MARRIAGE TO HORACE  
LINDRUM**





## **THE FLEET STREET PRESS**

**WAITING OUTSIDE ST. MARTINS-IN-THE-FIELDS THE MARRIAGE OF  
HORACE LINDRUM TO JOY WHITE MADE FRONT PAGE NEWS**





*Planet News* 7 99012

**HEB ONLY BRIDE.**

**BRIDE** (The Australian billiards player) was married at St. Ignace in the field, London, today (Thursday) to Miss JIMMY.

Picture shows: The Happy Couple after the ceremony.

BY JIMMY

BY JIMMY



**A KISS FOR THE BRIDE FROM ENGLISH  
CHAMPION JOE DAVIS**



**HORACE LINDRUM AND JOE DAVIS PLAY SNOOKER  
ON BILLIARD TABLE WEDDING CAKE**



**JOY LINDRUM RECEIVES A ROLLING PIN TO KEEP  
HORACE IN CHECK**



**RECEPTION AT THE ALBANY CLUB, LONDON.  
CRAZY GANG OF LONDON PALLADIUM FAME  
WITH ARCH OF CUES**



**A BABY ON THE SCENE.....**

JAN LINDRUM BORN 14TH APRIL, 1950 AT CHARRING CROSS HOSPITAL,  
LONDON.

MY SISTER, TAMMY LINDRUM WAS BORN 8TH JANUARY, 1957, LONDON.



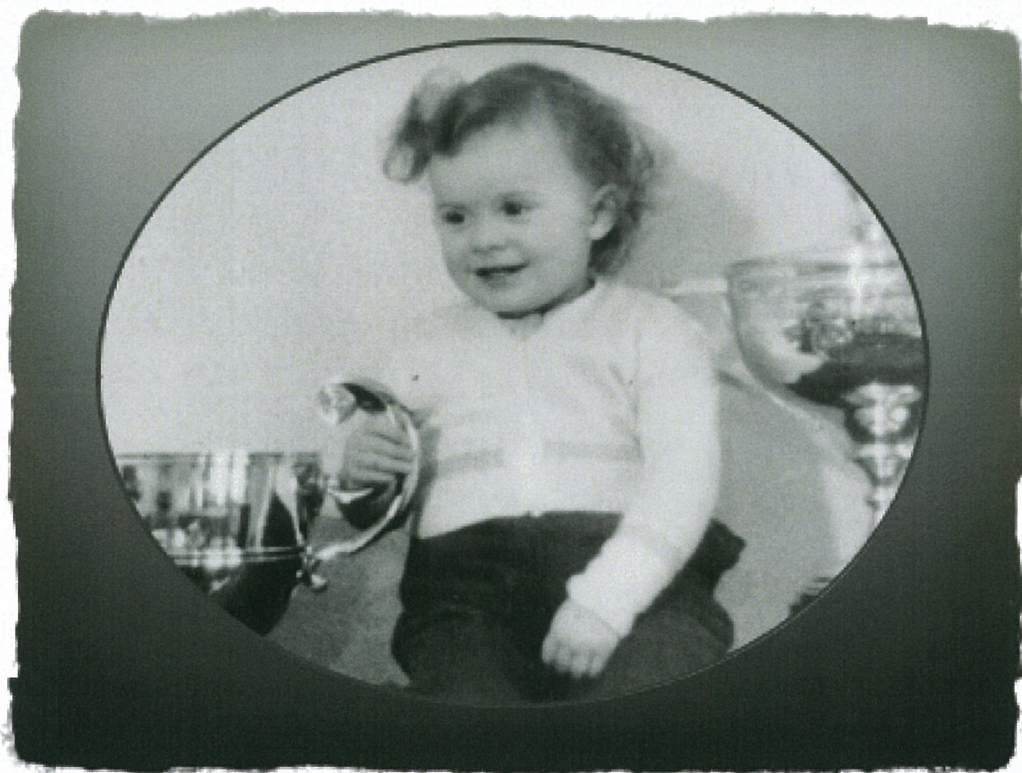
## **WORLD TITLE**

1951/52



Horace Lindrum and Clark McConarchy  
World Professional Snooker Championship  
Final 1951/52

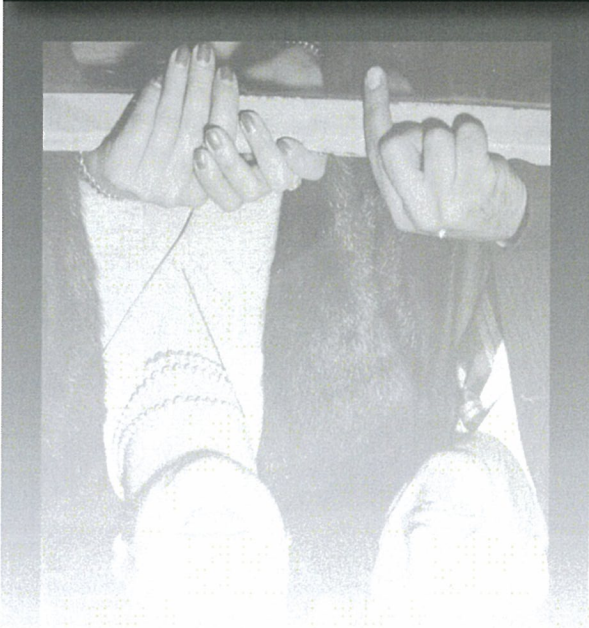
**JAN LINDRUM** TAKEN SHORTLY AFTER HER FATHER,  
**HORACE LINDRUM** WON THE WORLD SNOOKER TITLE, 1951/52.

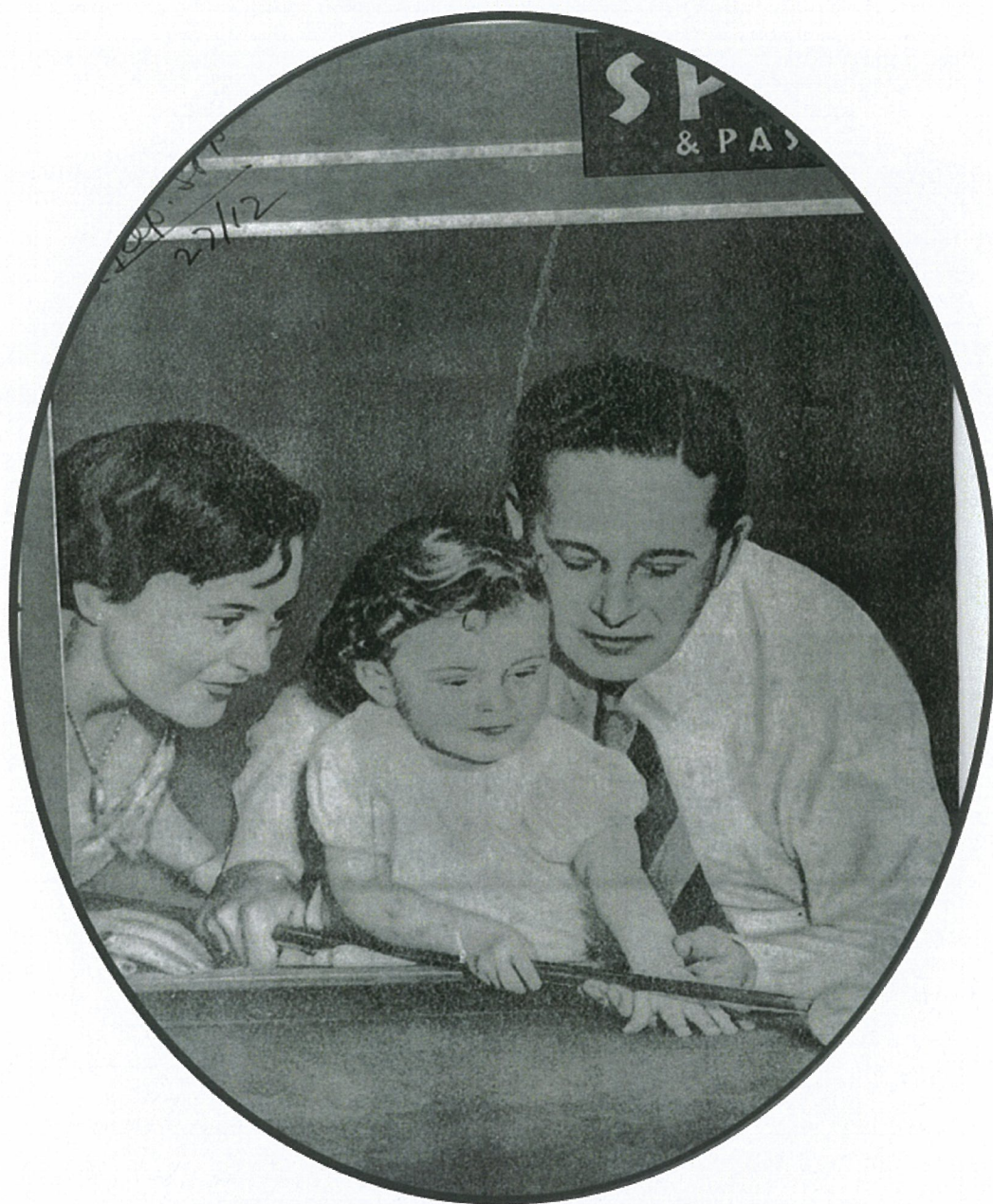


## BILLIARDS IN THEIR BLOOD



## OFFICIAL WORLD TOUR





Chief Ayo Williams  
Lagos, Nigeria





Machynlleth Snooker Club, visit 1952  
Snooker Century recorded during visit



Portland Training College for the Disabled



Press Club, London



Secunderbad



Horace Lindrum on one of his many  
trips to MALTA.



Charity Exhibition for the Bishop of Chelmsford



**HORACE LINDRUM**

Horace Lindrum, is undoubtedly one of the world's greatest round exponents and showmen ever to grace a billiard table.

Because of his outstanding ability at Billiards, Snooker, trick shots and being the world's greatest finger spin expert, the name Horace Lindrum is a by-word in 37 countries of the world.

As a teenager, he was reputed to be another "Boy Wonder" Billiards, when at the age of 18 years, he compiled the first great break in Australia of 1431 under the revised billiard law in an exhibition at Melbourne Town Hall against his uncle, Fred Lindrum Jr., who at that time held the Australian professional Billiards title. One year later, Horace played Fred the title and ran out an easy winner. During this match, Horace scored 3 breaks over a 1000.

At this period of time, another of his uncles, the legendary Fred Lindrum and greatest Billiard player the world has ever seen, stood as an insurmountable object in his path to the top of the world's Billiards ladder.

In an effort to become a personality in his own right, he turned to snooker and his outstanding ability at billiards seemingly been forgotten by most Australians ever since.

At the age of 21 years, he made his way to Sydney and defeated Frank Smith Jr. for the Australian Professional Snooker Championship, and defeated him easily, during this match,

world record for championship play. Having run out of opponents in Australia, he went overseas in 1935 and for the next 10 years he toured the world playing top professionals until the outbreak of war in 1939, he then returned home and served with the Australian Army for the duration.

In 1941 in an exhibition at the School of Arts, Penrith, N.S.W. Horace became the first and only Australian ever to score 1437 possible at snooker, 1437.

After the war in 1945, he resumed his world tours and 6 years later in 1952, achieved the ultimate at snooker by winning the Professional Snooker Championship of the World.

In an effort to rear his family, he then returned home, relinquished all titles and retired from match play, after nearly 20 years of living out of a suitcase.

## A TRIBUTE TO LINDRUM

The President, his Committee and members of the Amateur Billiards Association of N.S.W., deeply appreciate Horace Lindrum's decision to enter match play championships with Australia and some of the world's leading players.

The sporting magnanimity of this decision can be readily appreciated by all those who play snooker, or for that matter any sport whatsoever, as the vital necessity to play well in any championship game is the benefit of recent match play experience and Horace is returning to the table after eleven years' absence, lacking this necessity. His return to the game is at the request of the N.S.W. Amateur Association's Publicity Officer, so his appearance in this field does not constitute a challenge to the superiority of his opponents, but moreover it is an expression of his desire to further the game in general, and a show of confidence in our Association's belief that his presence in championships for the next few years in Australia will give the game added popularity and also serve to perpetuate the legendary name of LINDRUM which Australia is so proud to call her "own".

Once again we express our appreciation and sincerely hope that after Horace has the benefit of future match play, we see glimmer of the "Old Master's" past form.



**HORACE LINDRUM**  
World Professional Snooker Champion

**Bombay,**  
22nd November 1952.

*The Officers, Committee Members and  
all Members of the  
Madras Provincial Billiards Association*

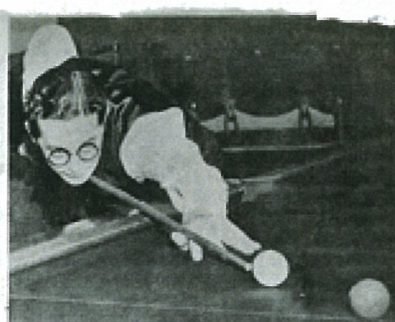
I have very fond recollections of my previous stay in India which was in 1907, at that time I only visited Bombay and Calcutta. Fortunately for me this tour has been arranged to cover a much larger area and I am most happy to have the opportunity of seeing of your country and making many new friends.

In the short time I have been here I have found the play to be very high standard and it has given me great pleasure to feel somewhat enthusiasm for the games of Billiards and Snooker.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Officers, Committee Members and Members of the Madras Provincial Billiards Association for their letter of welcome to Mrs. Lindrum, Baby Jan myself which I received on landing at Bombay.

We are looking forward to meeting you all at Madras in December. My very best wishes.

Sincerely,

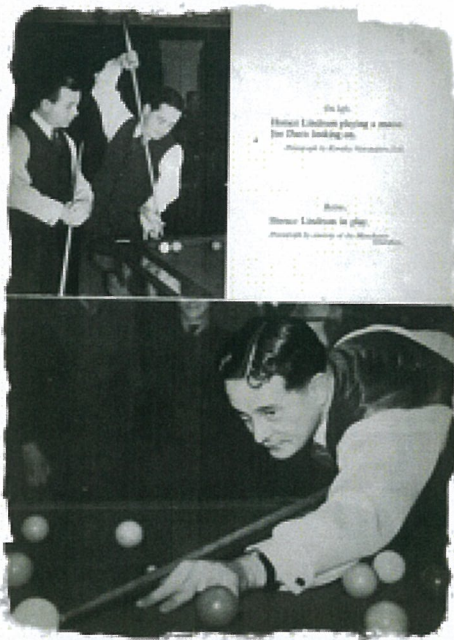


**HORACE LINDRUM**  
World Professional Snooker Champion  
and  
Australian Billiards Champion.

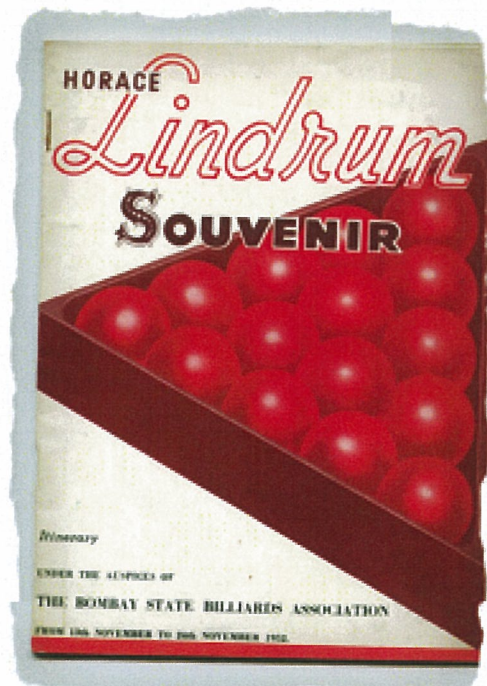
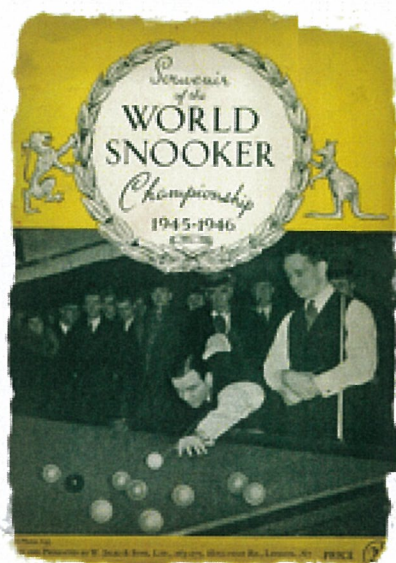
Horace Lindrum, a most inveterate sportsman in the world had been round the world six times. He participated in seven World Snooker Championships, being runner-up to Joe Davis on five occasions and won the title in 1950-52 beating Clark McConkey in the final.

Horace commenced practice at the tender age of 18 and signed his maiden Snooker century within 2 years. So far (October '52) he made 284 three-figure Snooker breaks, the highest being 144. In billiards he made his first four-figure break at the age of 18. He has to his credit 13 breaks of over 1000 the best being 1431.

Horace Lindrum born in Sydney, Australia on 15th January 1893, came from a long line of champions. In 1949 he married an English Lady, Miss Joy White, who was at that time the Secretary of the British Association and Control Council. They now have a pretty daughter over two years Miss Jan.



Horace Lindrum Christmas 1950  
with the Tottenham Hotspurs







Bombay



1953  
COLOMBO

Horace Lindrum at Moors Islamic Cultural Home.  
Exhibition for Sir Razik Fareed, kt., O.B.E., M.P.



Basutoland



Lagos

Madras, 1952



## **HORACE LINDRUM'S FILM DEBUT**

HORACE LINDRUM PUT CUE SPORTS ON TELEVISION FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH ENGLISH VETERAN CHAMPION, WILLIE SMITH AT THE ALEXANDRA PALACE, LONDON IN 1936.

AFTER HIS FILM DEBUT, HE PERFORMED TRICK SHOTS FOR TELEVISION COMMERCIALS.



## **GLOBETROTTER**

**HORACE LINDRUM – THE PETER PAN OF SNOOKER**



BASUTOLAND  
RHODESIA  
KENYA  
SOUTH AFRICA

NEW GUINEA   FIJI   NEW ZEALAND   UNITED STATES   CANADA  
THAILAND   MALAYSIA   SINGAPORE   CHINA   CEYLON  
MIDDLE EAST   EUROPE   MALTA   INDIA

and

From country town to country town in AUSTRALIA.



Horace Lindrum's book *Snooker, Billiards and Pool* was published posthumously, one year after his death in 1975. The publication coincided with the birth of Michael, the first of his three grandchildren.

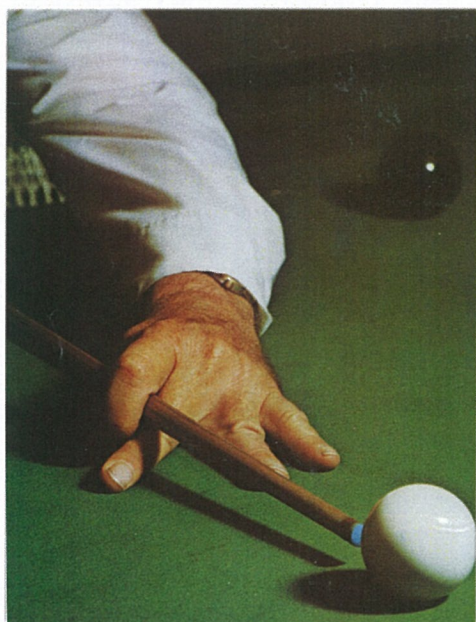
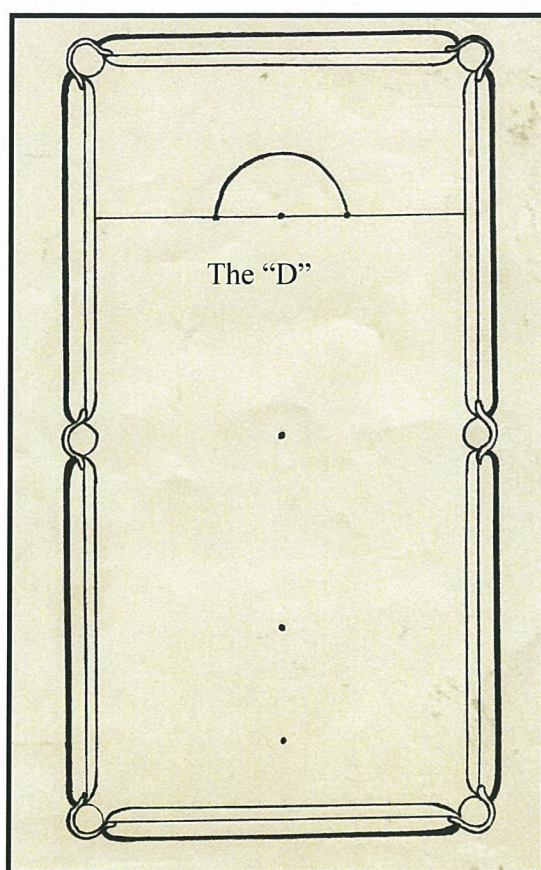
*Snooker, Billiards and Pool* went on to become an International bestseller with eight editions. Above is a picture of the Horace Lindrum 50 year cue plate.



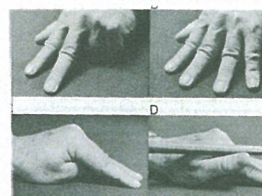
Horace Lindrum

Australian professional billiards and snooker champion for 33 years.  
World professional snooker champion, 1951/52.

The baulk line



Horace Lindrum demonstrating the complex **bridge**.



### The Bridge

Four steps demonstrated by Horace Lindrum

Place hand flat spreading fingers fanwise.  
Raise knuckles and with thick part of your hand  
and the base of the thumb kept firmly on table,  
elevate thumb keeping it close to the first finger.

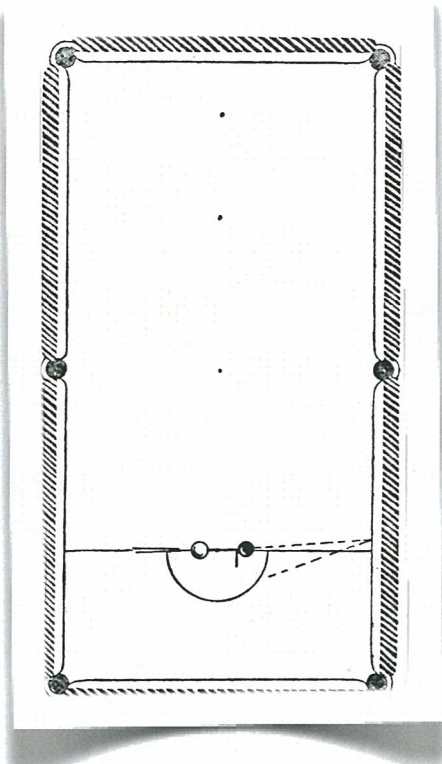


Diagram to the left demonstrates  
Transmission of Side

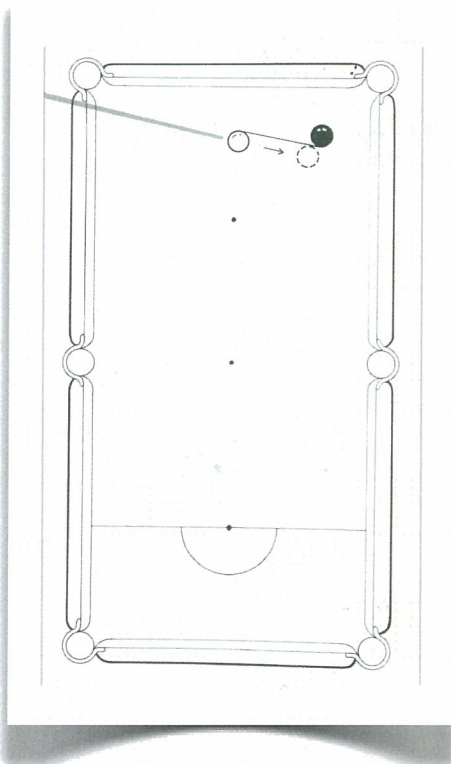
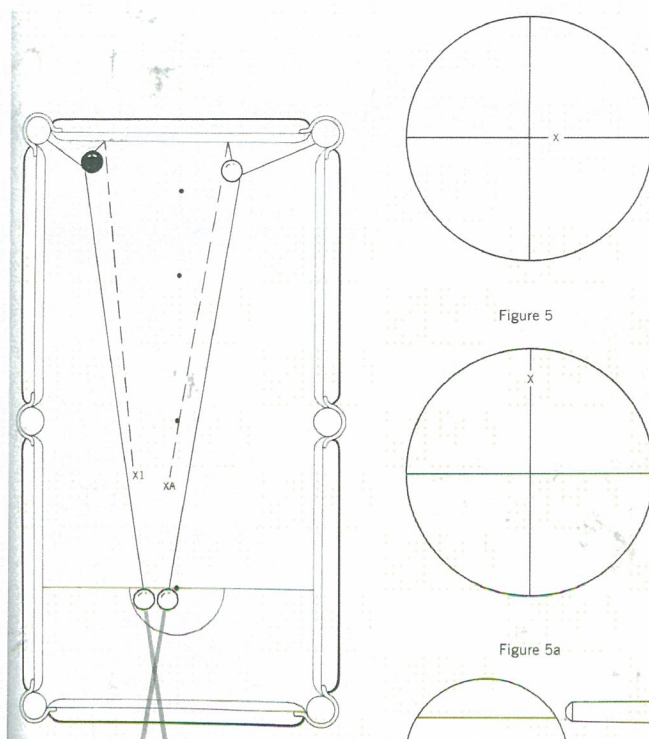


Diagram to left illustrates "Screw Shot"

'To obtain an understanding of the screw-back action of the cue-ball, the cue tip aim should be as low as possible, by this I don't mean pointing the cue downwards. A downward action of the cue is incorrect and could cause the tip to slide off the ball and damage the cloth.

The grip of the butt of the cue is shortened for the "screw" stroke, the cue remains level with the tip directed to the cue-ball as low as possible. The cue is squeezed slightly at the moment of impact but the action is smooth.

(Lindrum, H., 39)



The diagram above demonstrates two **losing hazards**.

The first is the red loser into the top left-hand corner pocket.

From the far left corner of the "D" the cue-ball is addressed top and centre.

The long white loser is played from a position closer to the centre of the "D" at the baulk line.

**Winning Hazard** is the name given to a pot, the cue-ball being directed to the red ball sending it into one of the pockets to score three points.

If the opponent's ball is potted, the score is two points, but it is best not to score this way because the ball potted remains in the pocket until the break is completed. This means that the player has only his own ball and the red on the table.

(Lindrum, H., 44)

## Highlights from the Horace Lindrum Record

1926	Marbles Title of New South Wales Age 14
1928	First snooker century Lindrum's Billiard Room, Flinders Lane, Melbourne Break 103 Age 16
1930	Billiard break 1324 Lindrum's Billiard Room Flinders Lane, Melbourne Age 18
1931	Speed record in Australian professional snooker championship Break 58 in 2 3/4 minutes Break 34 in 1 minutes All coloured balls in 32 seconds Break 97 in 5 1/2 minutes Break 83 in 4 minutes, 49 seconds.
1931	Won Australian professional snooker championship Retained title for over 33 years Final aggregate scores: Horace Lindrum 8899 Frank Smith 8263.
1932	World record break 137.

1933 Completed first 1000 break at billiards in Sydney  
Classic Billiard Room, George Street  
Opponent: Nick Winter  
Previous breaks over thousand made in Melbourne.

Cleared table on three occasions with breaks of  
129, 137 and 97.

Silver trophy presented in recognition of snooker  
break of 139 and billiards break of 1000.

Recorded billiards break of 1431 at Match Hall,  
Bourke Street, Melbourne. Opponent: Frederick III.  
This break (recorded at age 21 years) was 194 points  
higher than his uncle Walter's first big billiards break  
recorded at age 24.

1933-34 Won Australian professional billiards title  
from his uncle Frederick III  
Retained title for over thirty-three years  
Three breaks recorded, 1129, 1086, 1431.

In snooker match following the Big Billiards  
compiled snooker break of 118. World  
record at that time was held by Joe Davis with  
break of 114.

In a match against uncle Walter Lindrum,  
Walter broke balls, Horace made an  
unfinished break of 750.

Footscray: Two consecutive centuries, 110 and  
100. This was reported as an 'unprecedented  
snooker feat.

Lost challenge match to Joe Davis but won break honours with a break of 80.

Goulburn: Ninth thousand break at Billiards.

Windsor Hotel, Melbourne:  
Cleared table with snooker break of 130.

1936

Office recognition world record snooker break 114 at Bradford.  
First time two certificates awarded for identical breaks. Joe Davis & Horace Lindrum

Nottingham: Two centuries in snooker match with Joe Davis. Breaks 104 and 116, the latter beating the Official World record.

Time record – Daily Mail Gold Cup Tournament, London. Opponent, Joe Davis. Horace won frame 101 to 31 in 6 minutes.

Gold Cup Tournament, Glasgow  
Opponent, Tom Reece  
Scottish record billiard break of 1008  
First under the new baulk-line rules  
Joe Davis recorded the same break in London.

1937

Experimental television series filmed at The Alexandra Palace, London, April 14. Opponent: Willie Smith of Darlington.

Manchester: Horace recorded snooker break of 141. Opponent: Joe Davis.  
Official record break at that time was 133

recorded by Sidney Smith who completed the break on the same evening that Horace recorded a break of 131 against Joe Davis at Bradford. Because of a slight technicality (it was said that the table had not been examined by a member of the local Association prior to the commencement of the match), the break of 141 was not given official recognition. The British media championed the request for recognition. Recognition took 11 years. Following the break of 141, Horace recorded a 135 in Manchester in a match against Joe Davis breaking Sidney Smith's record twice in one week. The next day he recorded a break of 121.

Doncaster: Recorded a snooker break of 130.  
Opponent: Sidney Smith.

Rangoon  
Highest recorded break against the Chinese champion.

Singapore Cricket Club: Recorded snooker break of 134. Highest for Singapore.

Changi Barracks, Singapore: Recorded snooker break of 120.

Runnymede Club, Penang: Recorded snooker break of 124. Highest break for Penang.

Ipoh Club, Malaysia: Recorded snooker break of 116.

Mombasa Railway Sports Club: Recorded snooker break of 116.

1938	Manchester: Opponent, Joe Davis. Three centuries in two days.
1939	South African Tour: Opponent, Melbourne Inman. Cleared table on three occasions. Parow Break 124. Central Hotel, Cape Town Hotel Metropole, Cape Town: Break 121 Kroonstad Club Break 118
	Frankton, New Zealand. Cleared table with break of 128.
1939-1945	Opened Lindrums' Billiard room in Sydney to the Australian Armed Forces for recreational purposes.  Established competition for the Officers and men stationed at Victoria Barracks. Presented trophy for the event. The trophy remains in the Officers' Mess at the Barracks. Photographic evidence is held in the War Memorial archives.
1940	Cracow, Brisbane: Snooker break 137.
1941	Lindrums' Pitt Street, Sydney. Billiards break 1149 Opponent: Ron Wright

New Zealand  
Cleared table twelve times  
On twelfth occasion recorded break 134  
(114th century)

Recorded highest possible break  
at snooker at the Penrith School of  
Arts, New South Wales, 1941.

January 06, 1942.    Enlisted and served as a Sapper with the  
Royal Australian Engineers until discharge  
on medical grounds. Served out the rest  
of the war using his cue to good ends,  
raising thousands of dollars for the War Effort.

1944                    Lindrums' Billiard room, Sydney.  
Recorded snooker break of 142.  
Opponent: Sergeant Claire of the A.I.F.

1945                    Sydney  
Cleared table with break of 141.  
Opponent: Len Young, English Comedian.

1946                    Wolverhampton:  
Opponent: Joe Davis  
Five centuries to Joe Davis –  
133, 102, 115, 122 and 137

Four centuries to Horace Lindrum  
134, 119, 115 and 101 and a break of 97.

Runner-up world professional snooker championship  
against Joe Davis.

Derby Conservative Club, UK  
Three consecutive snooker centuries,  
105, 125 and 145.

1947 Radio New Zealand B. C. Broadcast.  
A. A. Club, Christchurch  
Cleared table with snooker break of 125.

New Zealand Tour  
21 snooker centuries  
Auckland Breaks 115 & 120  
Wellington Break 124  
Kaiaapoi Break 111  
Lyttleton Breaks 105, 111, 112,  
117 & 118  
Christchurch 105 & 112 recorded  
in successive frames  
– first time to be done  
in New Zealand  
114, 124, 109, 135, 112  
and 143

Invercargill Break 104  
Dannevirke Breaks 107 & 112  
Napier Break 122  
Te Kuiti & Waimana Breaks 102

\*\* The break recorded at Invercargill against W. J. Retter was a New Zealand record. Horace held the previous record break of 134 recorded at Tekauwhate in 1941.

Billiard breaks on same tour:

Masterton	585
Invercargill	1080

1948                      All time record  
Melbourne Town Hall  
International Challenge Championship  
In two weeks play against South African  
Champion Peter Mans, together they  
completed a 'match record of 12 centuries'.

Mans:                      101 & 108

Lindrum:                123, 101, 135, 134, 102, 103, 112,  
105, 141 and 100.

\*\* This was the highest number of centuries ever recorded in two week's  
of match play.

1952                      First 'Official' century to be recorded in  
India.  
Break: 115  
W.I.A.A. Club, Bombay  
Opponent: R. K. Vissanji  
  
Bangalore  
Recorded snooker break 136  
Highest snooker break for India  
  
Manchester  
Won the world professional snooker title

\*\* Donated a magnificent silver trophy to the New South Wales Amateur Association to commemorate the win and encourage up and coming players. This trophy is held at Mounties Club, Mount Pritchard, New South Wales. The Trophy has been converted by the Australian Association for use in the 'Bob Hawke Open'. This conversion was done without consultation with the family. Frank Harris's name is inscribed as having won the tournament in 1963. This is incorrect. Frank Harris won the New South Wales Amateur Championship in 1963. Horace Lindrum won the Australian Open.

Championship Dublin  
Recorded snooker break 117  
Highest recorded in Ireland

1955

German Club, Pretoria, South Africa  
Recorded 500th snooker century in public performance.  
  
Three consecutive centuries in one session bringing total to 502.  
  
137 recorded against D. Lombard.  
100 recorded against Captain Steyn van Rooyen  
103 recorded against Henry Jensen

1957

15 snooker centuries recorded in Africa bringing total to 671.  
  
Rhodesian record 136 recorded at the Bindura Country Club and Basutoland record break of 139.  
  
Announced retirement from competition play. Retired 'undefeated world professional snooker champion'.

	Debut in <i>The Counterfeit Plan</i> alongside Zachary Scott.
1959	Virginia, South Africa recorded two centuries, 120 & 126 bringing total to 728.
1962	Rockdale, New South Wales Four consecutive snooker centuries, highest century break 128.
1963	Exited retirement to aid flagging interest in the cue sports in Australia.  Won the Australian Open.
1967	Gisborne, New Zealand Broke own snooker record with snooker break of 143.
1970	Officially recognised as the first snooker player in history to record one thousand snooker centuries in public performance, many recorded in world record time of 2 1/2 to 6 minutes.  Cleared table with break of 133.

Aside from his professional record at the table, Horace Lindrum used his talent to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for hospitals, schools and charities across the globe, behind the scenes in television advertisements, authored an extraordinary number of articles and diagrams for newspapers and two books, *Billiards and Snooker for Amateurs* (1948) and *Snooker, Billiards & Pool* (1974). His trick-shot wizardry is unparalleled.

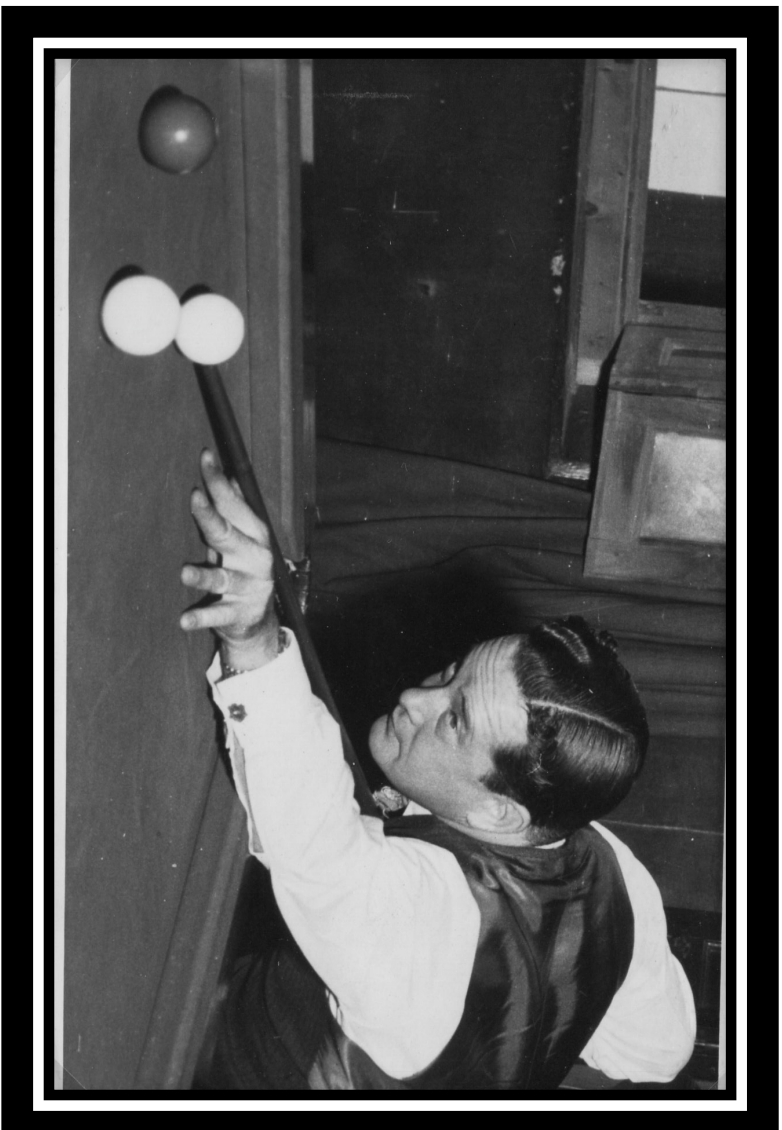


# **HORACE LINDRUM**

## **Demonstration Shots**

# **FIRM GRIP**

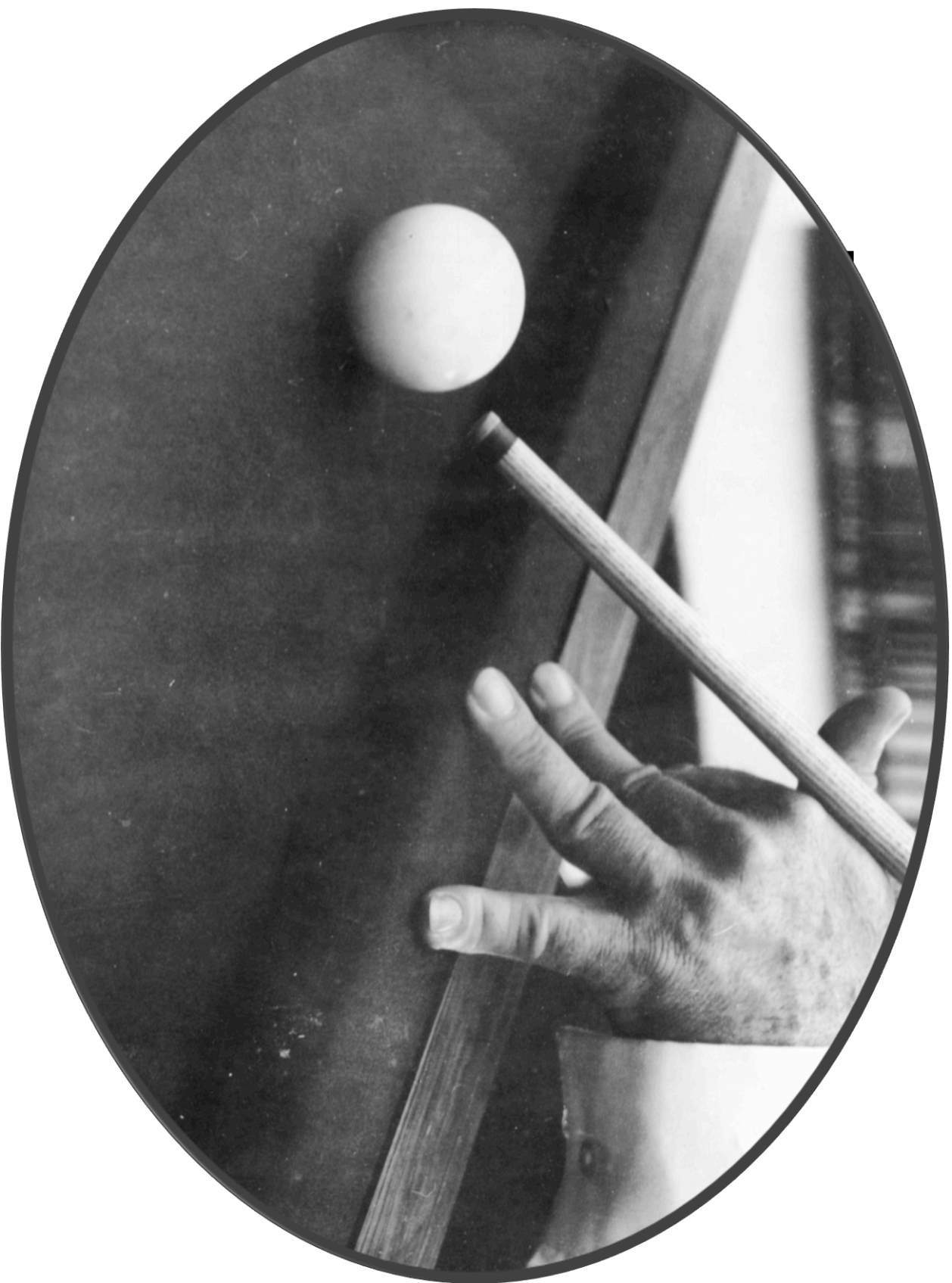




**ORDINARY BRIDGE HAND**



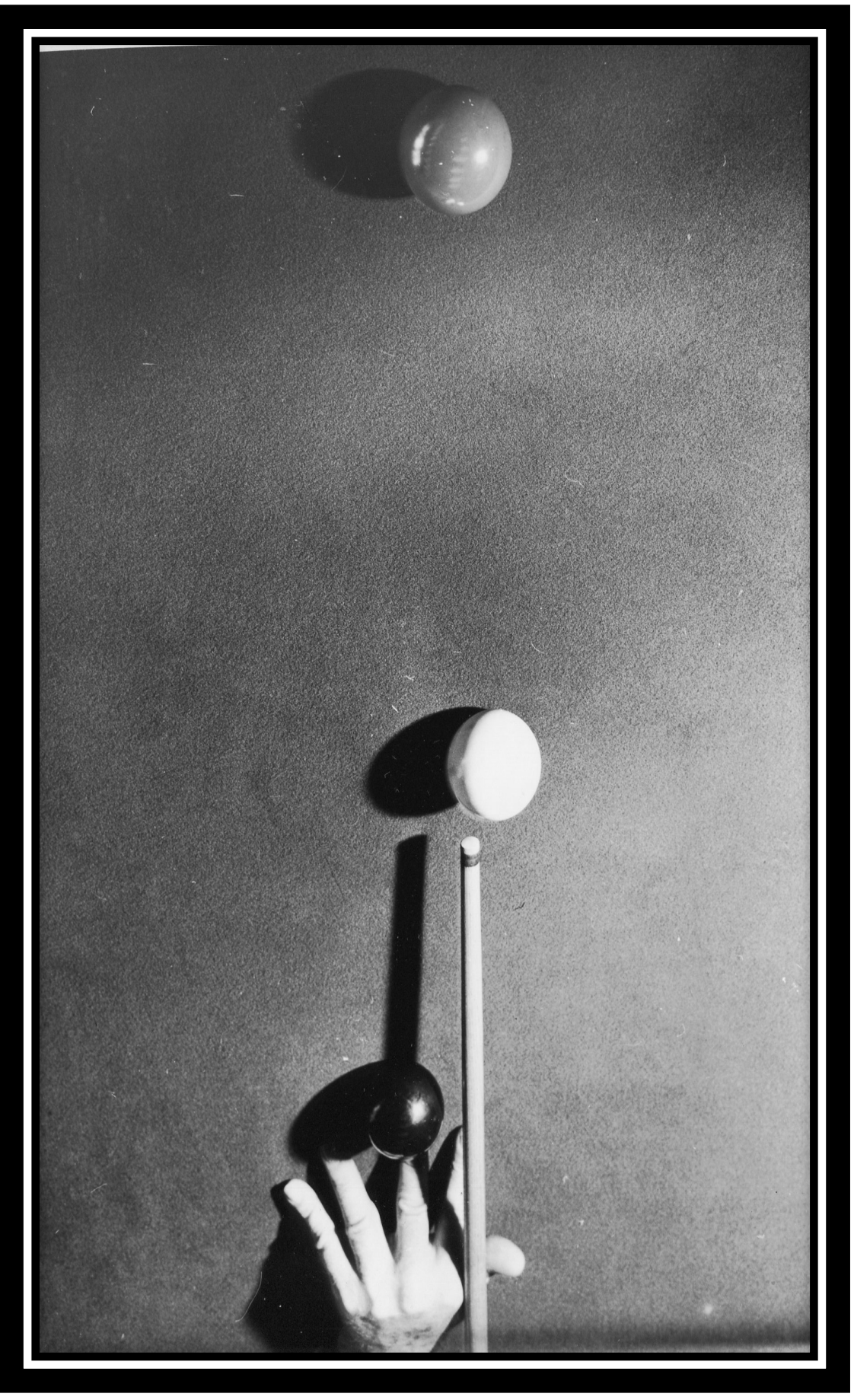
**THE LOOP BRIDGE HAND**



## THE SWERVE

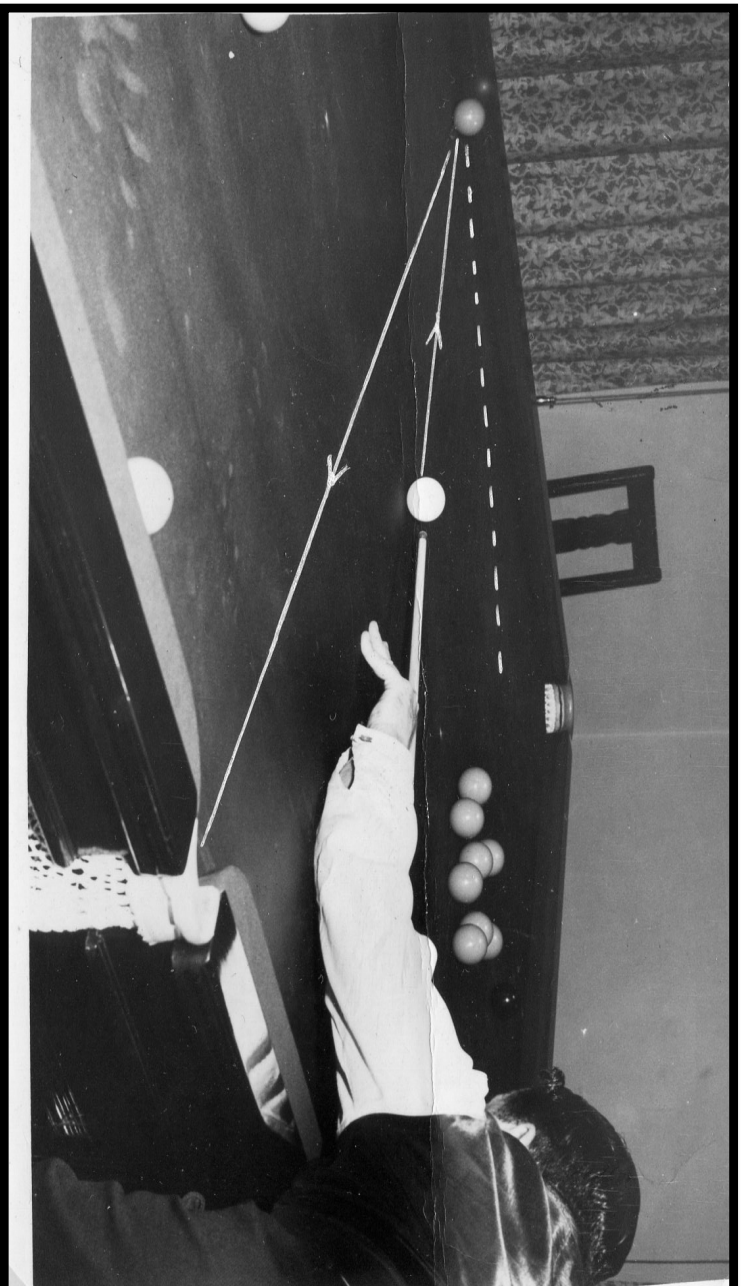


**SIDE**

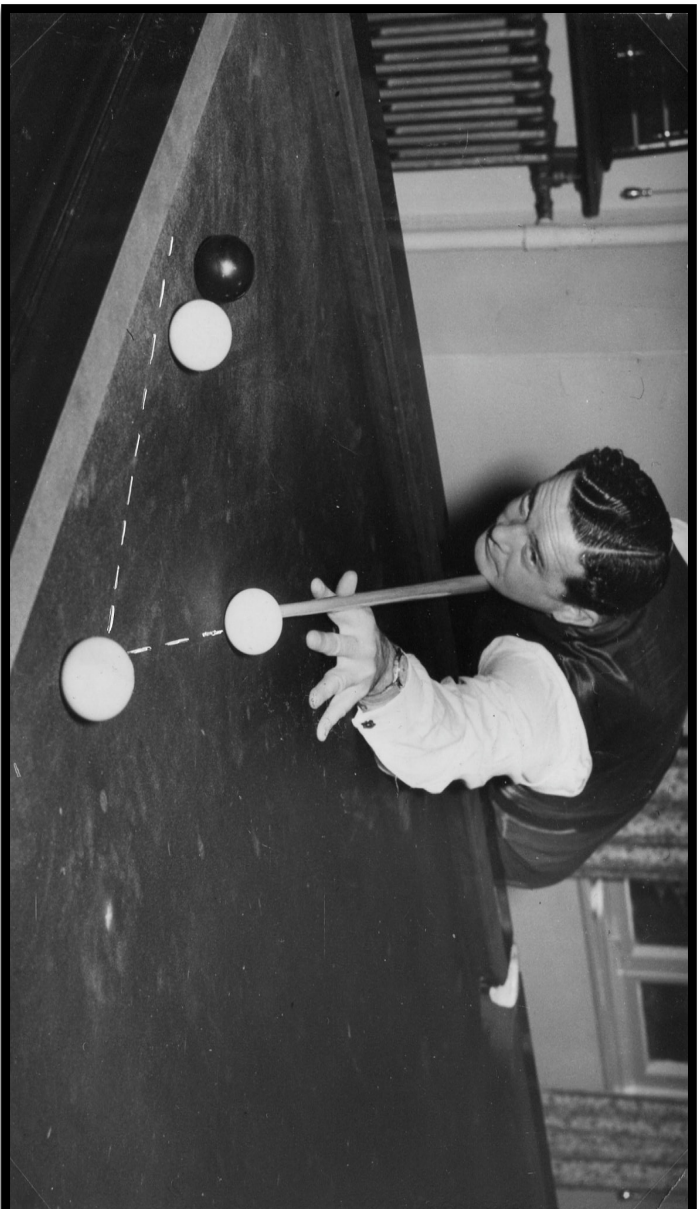


**APPLICATION OF SIDE**

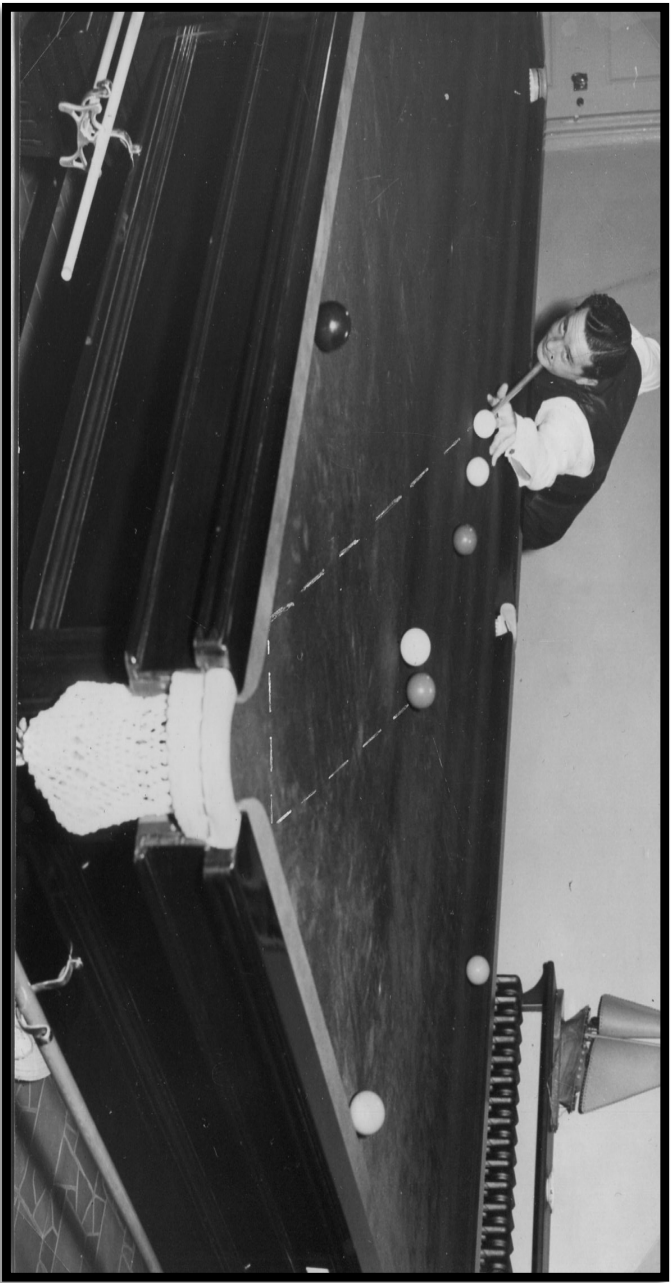




## THE DOUBLE

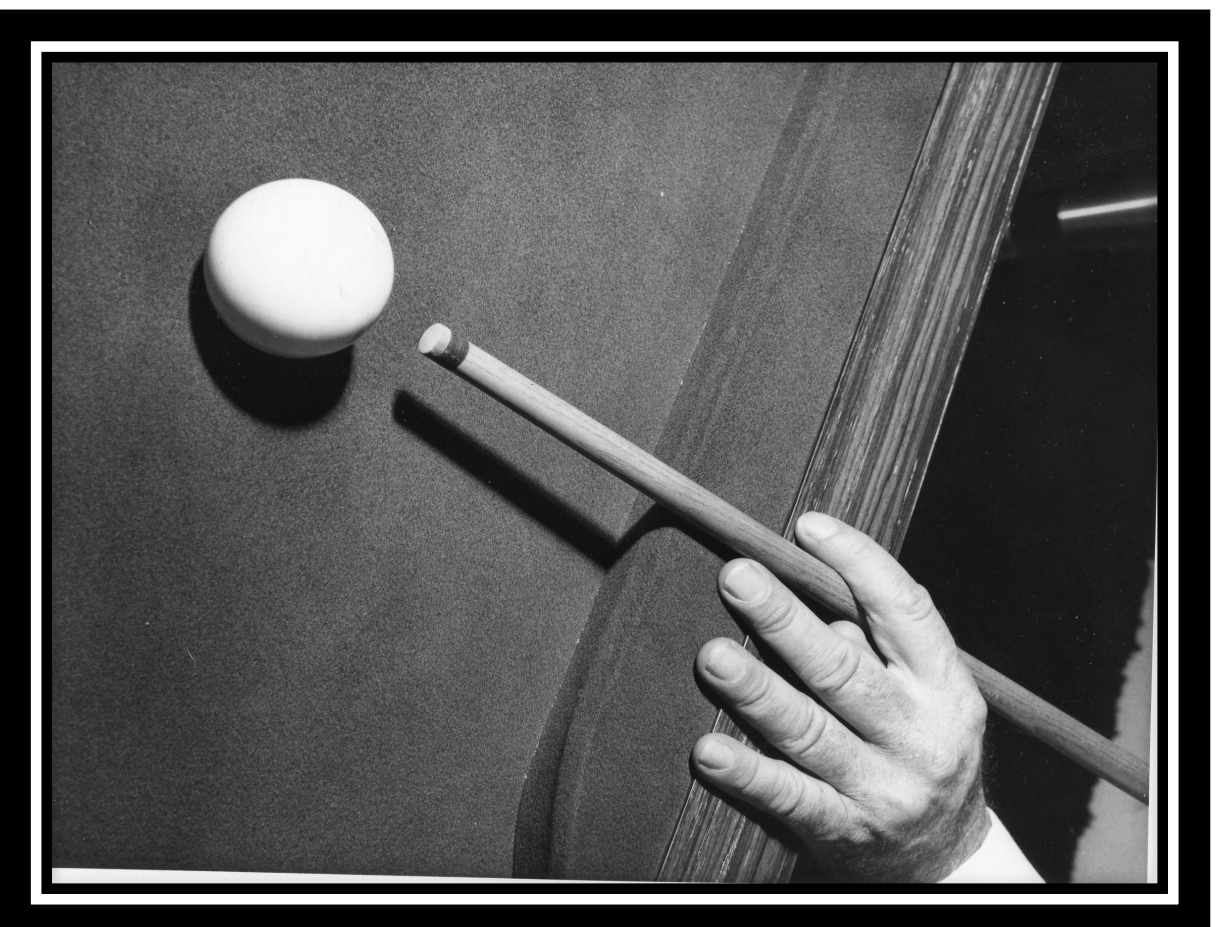


**PLAYING TO LEAVE A SNOOKER**



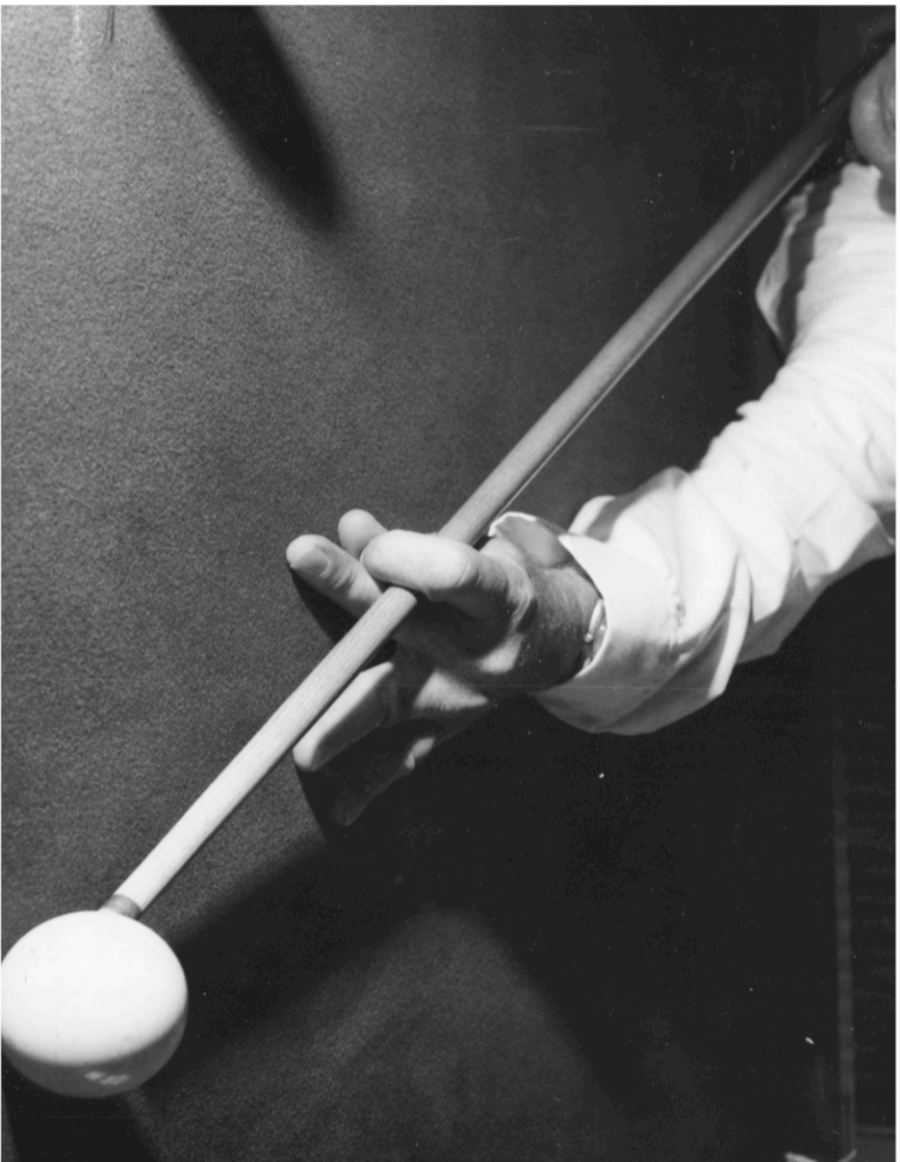
## **HOW TO OVERCOME A SNOOKER**

## CUSHION SHOT

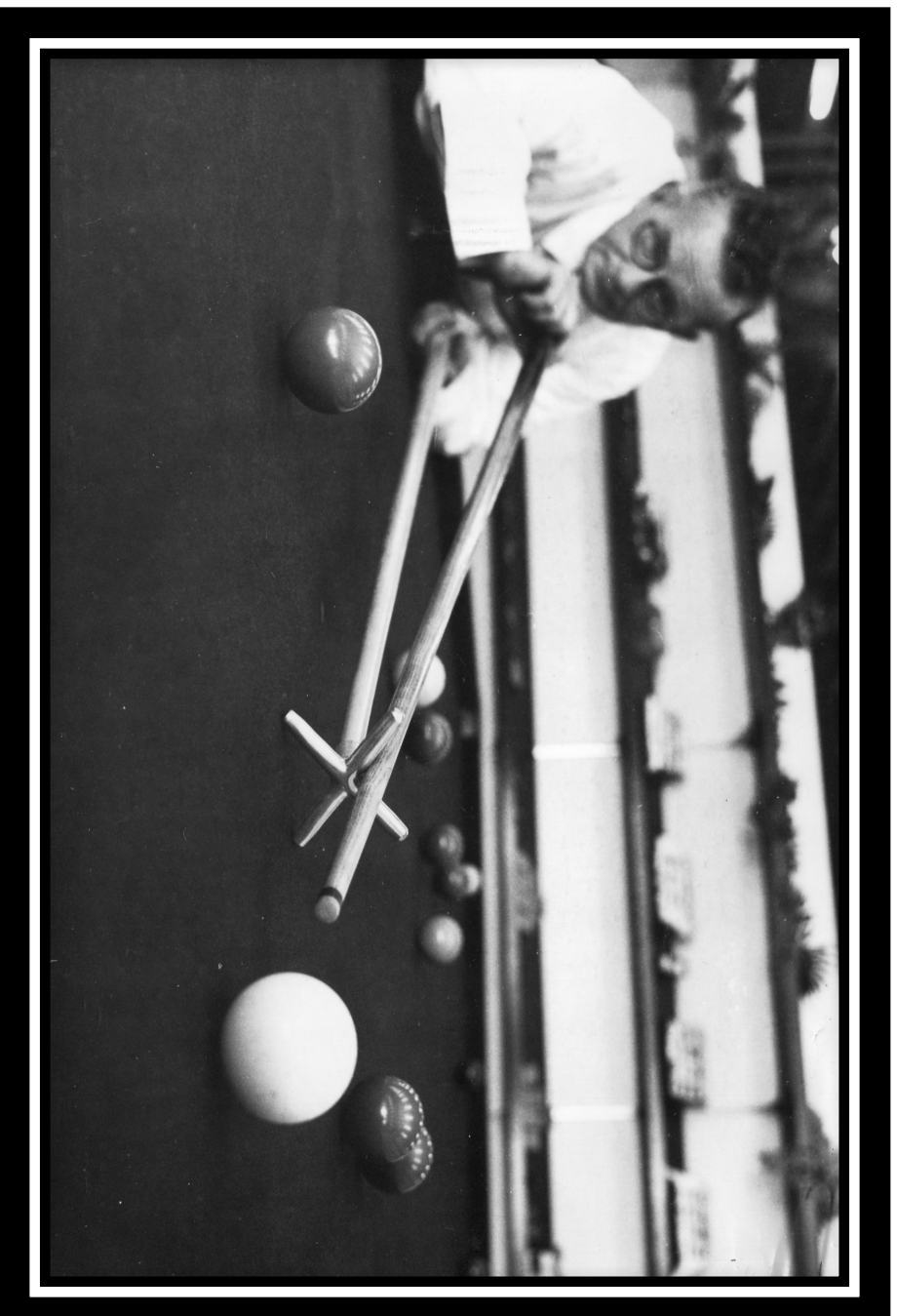




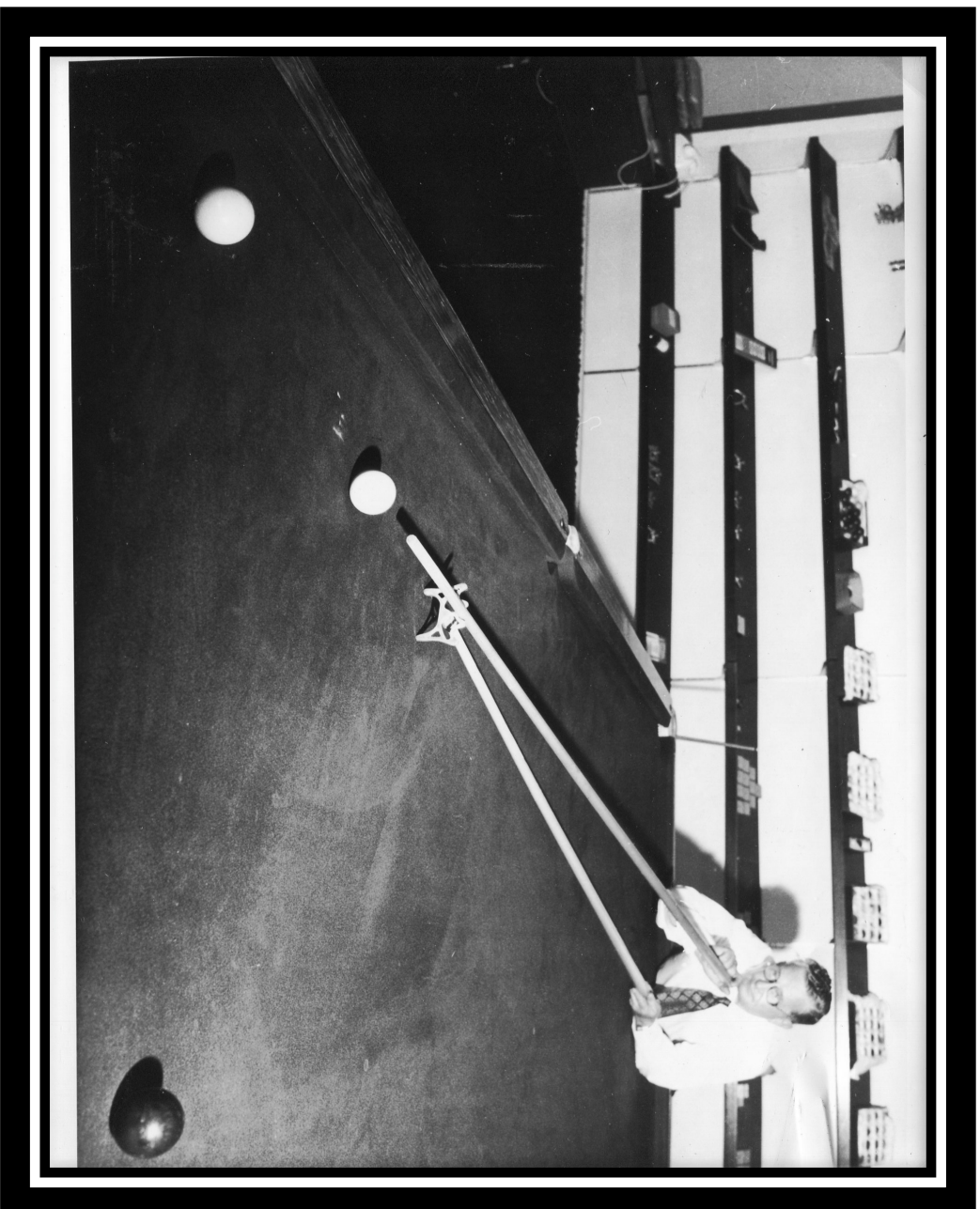
## THE THIN CONTACT



**THE SCREW SHOT**



**USING THE “REST”**



**USING THE "LONG REST"**



**THE MASSE SHOT**  
**50 years at the table**  
**and still the Master**  
**of the Cue**

**Horace Lindrum**  
**1912-1974**