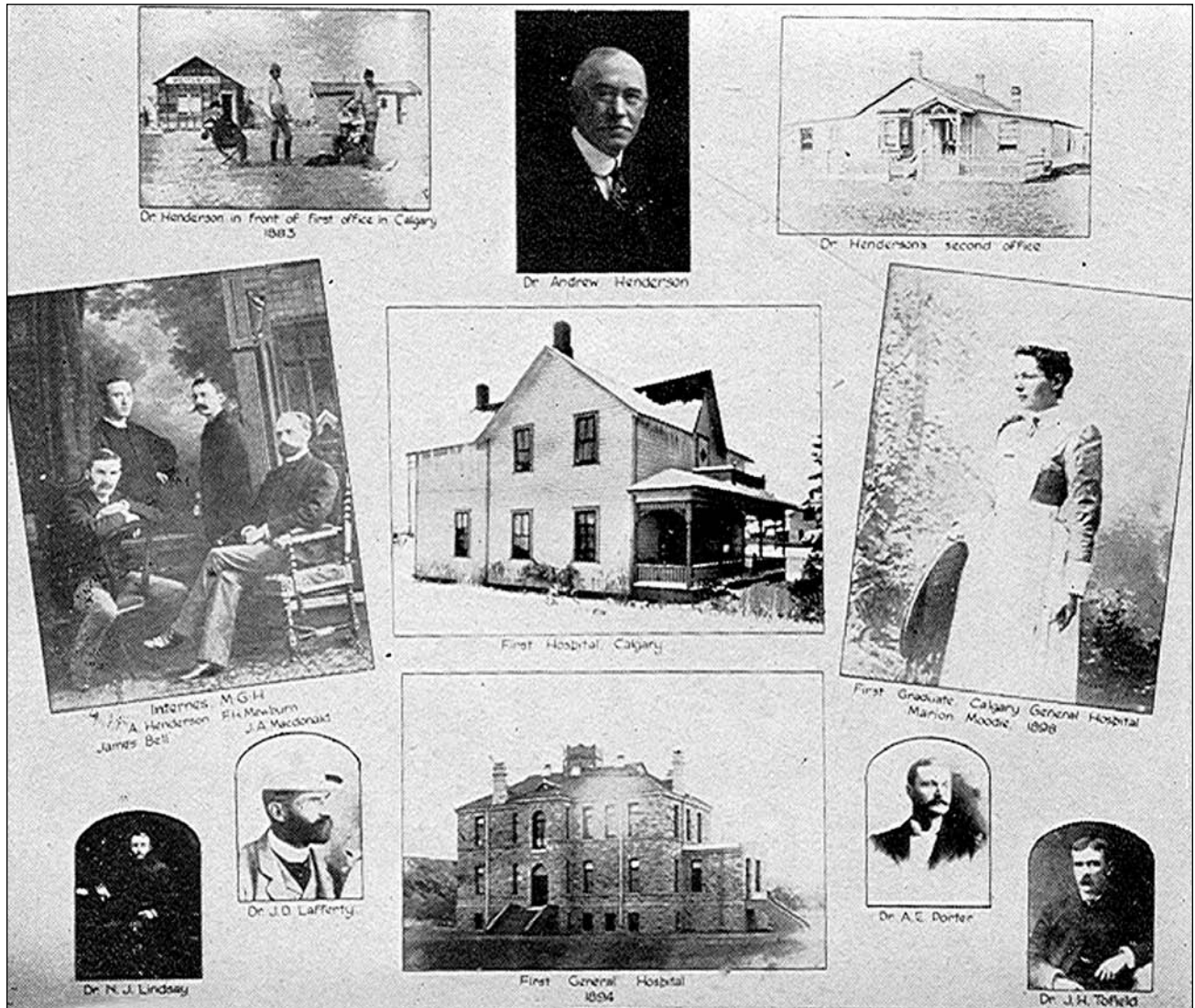




4-1

**NEVILLE JAMES LINDSAY, MB
1845-1925**



Early Calgary Doctors and Hospitals from Early Medicine in Alberta by Heber C. Jamieson, 1947 4-2

NEVILLE JAMES LINDSAY, MB 1845-1925

A great raconteur. Everyone liked him. He was a feature of optimism and vision for the city's future a booster for Calgary who tried to put his ideas into action ... one of the most straightforward and respectable citizens I have ever known.⁽¹⁾

Introduction

Dr. Neville Lindsay was the first physician to come to Calgary (August, 1883) and stay, until he retired (1908). He arrived with his brother-in-law Dr. R.G. (later Lieutenant Governor) Brett, who moved to Banff circa 1885.⁽²⁾ Dr. Lindsay was an early Calgary councillor who held Indian, NWMP and CPR medical contracts. He successfully speculated in real estate by acquiring land in South Calgary near the present Calgary Stampede and Rideau Parks. After subdividing the land he sold most of it to the Canadian Northern Railway in 1911 for over \$100,000. He then spent \$20,000 on a new house, before abandoning it. For years it was known as Lindsay's Folly. Lindsay Park, now the Talisman Center, was Dr. Lindsay's last land link with Calgary.

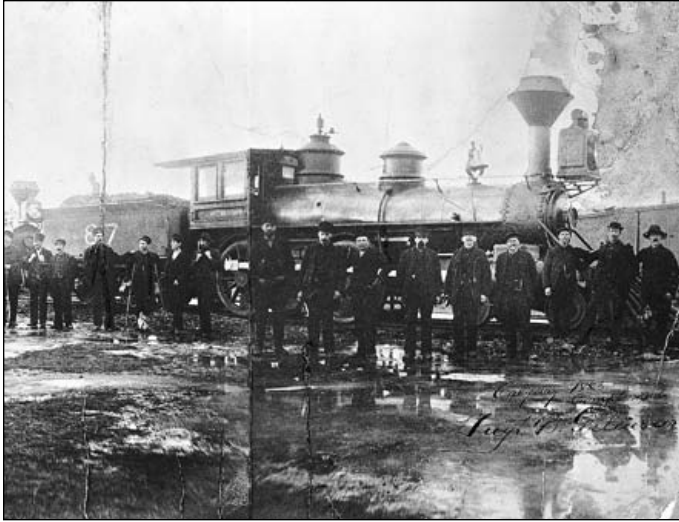
Before Calgary 1847-1883

Neville James Lindsay was born on his father's homestead in Glanworth, Ontario, on February 17, 1847.⁽³⁾ His parents were pioneer settlers who farmed in the Westminster township of Middlesex County near

London, Ontario. They were original Talbot Settlement homesteaders. After completing his early education, Lindsay taught school at nearby Mount Brydges west of London from 1864-1870. In 1870 he entered Trinity College at the University of Toronto and graduated with a MB in 1874 at the age of twenty-nine. The newly graduated Dr. Lindsay continued his medical education by taking private classes under the American physiologist Dr. John Fulton and postgraduate studies at McGill and New York.⁽⁴⁾

Dr. Lindsay returned to Watford, Ontario, forty miles west of London in 1875, where he practiced for the next eight years.⁽⁵⁾ He married Florence May Hungerford of Watford in 1879. One year earlier in 1878, her sister Louise Theodora Hungerford had married Dr. Robert G. Brett. The Bretts moved to Winnipeg in 1880 where Dr. Brett started a practice. Brett began speculating in real estate in anticipation of the arrival of the CPR construction crews later that year. Dr. Lindsay decided to follow the Bretts, sans wife, to assess the Winnipeg opportunities for him-

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1. (Lindsay, Neville J.) Pioneer of Calgary, Passes to Last Rest, Calgary Herald, December 17, 1925.
 2. Peach, Jack
Calgary Herald Saturday September 3, 1983. Dr. Gerald McDougall hinted, in *Medical Clinics of Southern Alberta* (page 194) at the brother-in-law relationship. Lindsay didn't comment on the relationship in his Reminiscences. Neither did Dr. Stanley. The relationship was confirmed in the history of the Edmonton legal firm, *The Emery Jamieson Story 1883-1983*, printed in 1993 (page 35). Neville Lindsay Jr. volunteered to be a military aide-de-camp to his uncle, Lt. Gov. Brett of Alberta in 1915. Drs. Brett and Lindsay were both medical students at UofT from 1870-1874. Both came from near London, Ontario. Dr. Brett was from Strathroy and practiced in Arkana, Lambton County, Ontario. For further notes on Dr. Brett see David J. Hall's "Robert George Brett" the DCB Volume 15: 144-147, 2005; R. Lampard's "Dr. R.G. Brett", Alberta History 51(2): 13-22, Spring 2003 and Brett profile; and the Brett Fonds MI/V83 at Glenbow.
 3. Stanley, George D.
"Dr. Neville James Lindsay", CACHB 4(2):6-9, August 1939.
 4. Stanley, George D.
"Dr. Neville James Lindsay", pages 6-9. Dr. Lindsay also took some special courses at the Manhattan and New York Eye and Ear Infirmarys. His specialty, then known as EENT, was split after WWII into ENT (ears, nose and throat diseases) and Ophthalmology (eye diseases). It was common for postgraduate training to be undertaken, after several years in practice and after paying off medical school debts. The suggestion that his McGill postgraduate training was pre-1874, stemmed from his obituary in the Calgary Herald of December 17, 1925. He may have taken it in 1874/75. On an office card that year he advertised himself as N.J. Lindsay, M.B., Physician, Surgeon Accoucheur, Member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Napier, Ontario.
 5. Lindsay, Neville J.
Obituary, Calgary Herald December 17, 1925. Lindsay's Military Medical Service included earning a second class certificate in the School of Military Instruction (Toronto, 1872). He became an ensign and later an assistant surgeon in the 27th Lambton Battalion of Infantry (1878). There is no record of his participation in the Northwest Rebellion of 1885.



First Train into Calgary, August 11, 1883

4-3

self. The real estate boom had auctioneers selling lots all day and night.⁽⁶⁾ How Dr. Lindsay fared is unknown, but he returned to Watford shortly afterward, apparently poorer but wiser. Lindsay returned to Ontario just in time for his eldest son Edwin to be born in September 1881. But Dr. Lindsay's interest in the Canadian west had been kindled.

Arrival in Calgary August 11, 1883

In July 1883 Dr. Lindsay was back in Winnipeg, re-meeting Dr. Brett who introduced him to all the notable physicians and politicians of the city.⁽⁷⁾ Try as they might, Lindsay could not be persuaded to stay. In early August Drs. Lindsay and Brett boarded the CPR freight and construction train heading west to Calgary. Their baggage was transported on a flatcar, while they slept in the caboose.⁽⁸⁾ The trip to Calgary took about a week, although his son later said it was five days.⁽⁹⁾ Lindsay described it as long and boring

except for the entertainment provided by R.G.'s jokes and stories.⁽¹⁰⁾ The day before arriving in Calgary, the two doctors saw the Bow River for the first time. The train stopped and the doctors had a memorable cup of water from the Bow River that cheered but did not inebriate. The next time the train stopped, it was at the end of the rails, on the east side of the Elbow River in Calgary.⁽¹¹⁾ To reach the cluster of tents on the west side of the river, they had to cross the Elbow river on a log bridge using a hand rope. The arrival of Lindsay and Brett on August 14, 1883 was just three days after the first official train had been royally received by the townspeople on August 11, 1883.

In August 1883, Calgary was a frontier town at the end of the rails. Venturing into Calgary the doctors found the Royal Hotel to be a tent.⁽¹²⁾ Alongside it were a few buildings: the NWMP Barracks, a two story Hudson Bay store, the I.G. Baker outlet, and the Murdoch and Roselle Family Log Houses. The two physicians walked through the town, calling on the IG Baker manager (G.L. Brown), the NWMP headquarters (Major Dowling) and Andrew Henderson, the only doctor in town.⁽¹³⁾

The Calgary population was one hundred, plus the construction crews. Dr. Lindsay's Royal Hotel room was #12, a stall four feet wide. He soon moved to a one room shack that served as "everything", until Mrs. Lindsay arrived in 1884.⁽¹⁴⁾

Several days later the two intrepid physicians were enticed - by the rumor of a Sun Dance - to visit the nearby Sarcee Indian reserve. They hired a buckboard and headed west to see it. A short distance out of Calgary, they were stopped by a band of twenty Indians covered with war paint and wanting money. The doctors' audacity, in making a break for it, sur-

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6. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West During the Early Eighties", page one. The 13 page handwritten autobiography was completed by Dr. Lindsay sometime after 1915, while his brother-in-law Dr. R.G. Brett was the Lt. Gov. of Alberta (1915-1925). Manuscript #M4043, Glenbow. One syndicate of four speculators made \$71,000. Dr. Lindsay moved or contemplate moving his practice four times, to: Winnipeg 1881, Calgary 1883, Yukon 1898, 1904. He always returned to Calgary.
7. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 2. Lindsay met Drs. Schultz (later the Manitoba Lt. Gov.), Dr. Wilson (the Provincial Secretary) and Drs. A. Codd and Sutherland, but wasn't convinced to stay in Winnipeg the second time.
8. Lindsay, Neville J. Unsigned undated biographical notes entitled "Neville James Lindsay, M.D." Three pages. Deposited in Glenbow circa 1967, as manuscript #M4043. Based on an interview, when Dr. Lindsay lived on the corner of Center Street and 5th Avenue.
9. Stanley George D. "Dr. Neville Lindsay", page 7.
10. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 2.
11. Lindsay Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 3.
12. Stanley, George D. "Dr. Neville Lindsay", page 7. Dr. Henderson arrived in Calgary by horseback on June 9, 1883. He left in 1887.
13. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 4.
14. Stanley, George D. "Dr. Neville Lindsay", page 8

prised the Indians who let them go. After watching the Sun Dance, an attempt by the braves to tear out their chest muscles so they would be eligible to become Chiefs, they too left, but not before emptying their pockets of silver and giving it to the Chief as prepayment for a safe passage back to Calgary.⁽¹⁵⁾ On the way back they met Sam Livingston, who said he had never had a problem with the Indians. His solution was to always carry a rifle strapped to his plow.

The next day they met the surveyor who had discovered the coal mines at Canmore and sold the properties to the CPR. Then came a visit to lawyer A.D. Perry with whom Lindsay later built an office.⁽¹⁶⁾

Staying in Calgary, NWT 1883-1905

Lindsay decided to stay in Calgary, but Dr. Brett went back to Winnipeg. Dr. Lindsay found early life in Calgary to be challenging. There were no banks and



Calgary Council 1884. Dr. Lindsay is 4th from the left, 4-4 back row.

none would arrive until 1885. Bank deposits had to be trusted to someone going to Winnipeg or deposited in a wholesale house. All trading was done in cash.⁽¹⁷⁾ It took forty days to get a letter back from Ontario, Victoria, or Vancouver. The transcontinental CPR would not be completed until November 1885 and the first scheduled transcontinental train would not arrive in Calgary until June 1886.

Dr. Lindsay's first patient had a Colles fracture of his forearm. After setting it he charged double the one dollar rate in the Ontario fee schedule. The cowboy gave him ten and said, "I'm forty ahead of you."⁽¹⁸⁾ Lindsay never looked back, especially after making his first real estate investment at the corner of Center Street and 5th Avenue South.⁽¹⁹⁾

In December 1883, the Calgary CPR station was moved from the planned Section 14 owned by Captain Denny of the NWMP, to Section 15 owned by the CPR and James (later Senator) Lougheed.⁽²⁰⁾ Lougheed had arrived in the summer of 1883 from Medicine Hat, a few days earlier than the CPR. He had walked the last forty miles from the end of the rails.⁽²¹⁾

In April 1884 Dr. Lindsay's wife and his son Edwin arrived from the East.⁽²²⁾ Mrs. Lindsay was the second white woman in Calgary. By then its population had risen to five hundred.⁽²³⁾ That same year Dr. Lindsay was co-opted to run for the first city council. He came in third with 179 votes. The slate had forty-seven contestants.⁽²⁴⁾ The top four candidates were declared elected. Lindsay remained an Alderman through 1884/5. He also helped form the Bow River Masonic Lodge in 1884, the first lodge in the NWT.

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15. Peach, Jack Calgary Herald, Saturday September 3, 1983.
16. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", pages 5-7. For a discussion of the Sun Dance or religious festival of the Plains Indians see E.E. Clark's *The Origin of the Sun Dance in Indian Legends of Canada*, pages 63-67, McLelland and Stewart, 1995. The Sun Dance was temporarily banned in Canada and the USA. The ban was later lifted, omitting the self-torture feature.
17. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", pages 9-10.
18. Stanley, George D. "Dr. Neville Lindsay", page 8.
19. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 8.
20. McGinnis, Janice D. "Birth to Boom to Bust", in *Building in Calgary 1874-1914*, pages 7-19 edited A.W. Rasporich and Henry Klassen, Frontier Calgary, UofC, 1975.
21. Lampard, Robert Unpublished 60 page manuscript, entitled "Alberta's Best Kept Secret, the AHFMR", pages 1-3, 2004. The manuscript was abridged and reprinted as "The Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research: Its Formative Years 1975-2005", in Part 2.
22. Stanley, George D. "Dr. Neville Lindsay", page 8.
23. McDougall, Gerald *Medical Clinics and Physicians of Southern Alberta*, pages 13-14, UofC Press, 1991.
24. Hardwick, E., *The Science, The Art and the Spirit*, in Volume 5: 304, 306-10, Century Calgary, 1975. Also see Burns and Jamieson, E., Elliott's Calgary Alberta, her Industries and Resources, pages 19-21, 53, March 1885, reprinted by the Tregillus, E. Glenbow Museum. The population of Calgary was about 1,000. When the book was written Dr. Lindsay was noted as "at present absent from town, and will be absent for some months." March 1885 was the month the North-West Rebellion started.

He was its first Grand Master.⁽²⁵⁾ Dr. Lindsay joined the Al Azhar Shriner Temple when it was formed, and later became a member of several beneficiary societies in the community.

Shortly after his arrival in 1883, Dr. Lindsay signed a Federal contract to provide medical care to the Indian Reservations and Schools near Calgary. He



Dr. Lindsay with Neville Jr and Florence Hazel 4-5 circa 1902

visited the Blackfoot, Sarcee, and Stoney Indian Reserves and Schools on horseback, once a month for eleven years.⁽²⁶⁾ Lindsay's shortest trip was to the Indian School at High River twenty-six miles away.⁽²⁷⁾ He usually covered the distance in a day. Lindsay signed a Calgary NWMP contract at the same time.

In 1886 he signed a third contract, with the CPR. It lasted until 1889 when part of it was turned over to Dr. Brett. The contract was to provide medical care to the railway crews from Gleichen, Alberta to Donald, BC - a distance of over two hundred miles.

Many patients came over one hundred miles to visit Dr. Lindsay. Despite his reputation, Lindsay's prescriptions were limited to a few pharmaceutical admixtures⁽²⁸⁾, several strong analgesics, or if all else failed, whiskey. The personable and friendly Dr. Lindsay was always busy.

In 1886 Drs. Lindsay, Lafferty and Henderson made the first pitch to the mayor of Calgary (Mr. C.G. King) for a hospital.⁽²⁹⁾ Fortunately a four and a half acre site on the Bow River, for the 1907 Calgary General Hospital, was secured from the NWT Assembly before interest waned. It was not until November 1890 that Calgary's first hospital was opened as a cottage hospital in a small house in downtown Calgary. Dr. Lindsay was the medical superintendent.⁽³⁰⁾

Rural emergencies were a challenge. On one occasion it was so cold and windy Dr. Lindsay had to walk backwards most of the distance. The Station Agent said it was -50° .⁽³¹⁾ On another occasion Lindsay was called out to perform an autopsy on an Indian who was thought to have been murdered. While performing the autopsy, two hundred Indians, who were superstitious about the practice, quietly encircled him. When he suddenly realized he was surrounded his assistant, the local Indian agent, said, "don't stop, keep operating and find the bullet". Luckily he found the bullet fragment near the spine and passed it amongst the Indians as confirmation of the murder. If he had not found it, he would likely have been on the receiving end of the next bullet.⁽³²⁾

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25. Lindsay, Neville J. Unsigned biographical notes, page 3.
 26. Lindsay, Neville J. Unsigned biographical notes, page 2.
 27. Lindsay, Neville J. Unsigned biographical notes, page 2.
 28. Merck and Co *Merck Manual* (1899). Pharmaceuticals available at the time were catalogued in the 1899 Merck Manual of the Materia Medica. 192 pages. It provided a summary of Therapeutic Indications and a Classification of Medicaments in a Ready-Reference Pocket Book for the Practicing Physician. It required that "every order must be transmitted through an established pharmacist." It was Merck's first manual.
 29. Price, Harry W. "A Survey of Alberta Jubilee Hospitals", CACHB 20: 62-64, 1955.
 30. McGugan, Angus C. "The Drama of Medicine in Alberta," AMB 20(3): 39, August 1955. Dr. McGugan referred to Dr. Lindsay as the Medical Superintendent. Dr. McGugan was the medical superintendent of the UAH hospital (1942-1960) and an avocational medical historian.
 31. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 10.
 32. Lindsay, Neville J. "Reminiscences of the West", page 11.



The partially built Lindsay home (pre 1955), Calgary

On May 15, 1889, Dr. Lindsay was called to a CPR accident in Field, BC.⁽³³⁾ The trip would have kept him away from his Calgary practice for several days. It encouraged him to seek a partner. Lindsay asked Dr. Henry George of Kirkton, England, through his recently arrived father-in-law lawyer William Bernard, to join him in practice. Dr. George accepted and came to Calgary, arriving in the city on September 11, 1889. He joined Dr. Lindsay in practice the next day.⁽³⁴⁾

In 1894 Lindsay ran in the NWT election in Calgary East but was unsuccessful, so he accepted the nomination as President of the NWT Medical Council instead.⁽³⁵⁾

To the Yukon in 1898

In 1898, at age fifty-three, Dr. Lindsay went to the Yukon via the White Pass, in search of gold and copper.⁽³⁶⁾ Lindsay befriended the local Indians and through their knowledge was directed to several copper prospects, which he secured. Before making the 1898 trip, Dr. Lindsay had received the approval of

the NWT Medical Council to investigate the problem of illegal medical practitioners, and to conduct examinations for medical registration in the Yukon.⁽³⁷⁾ The examination papers did not arrive in time, so he accepted the applications of thirteen physicians. Four were later invalidated.⁽³⁸⁾

While there, Dr. Lindsay organized the first Yukon Medical Council and collected registration fees totaling \$1200 from at least fifteen physicians. When Dr. Lindsay asked the sponsoring NWT Medical Council to provide financial assistance for conducting prosecutions against unlicensed practitioners, his request was denied with the rejoinder that any money from the fines could be kept but nothing more should be requested. Dr. Lindsay had already contributed ten dollars of his own money to start the process. He returned to Calgary in the fall of 1898, but revisited the Yukon in 1903 with his nephew Dr. R.H. (Harry) Brett, who had just graduated from the Manitoba Medical College.

The Remaining Calgary Years 1905-1925

Lindsay continued his medical practice until 1908, when he retired to spend more time managing his real estate investments.⁽³⁹⁾ In 1911, the Canadian Northern Railway wanted land for a station and yards in Calgary. They bought almost all of Dr. Lindsay's twenty-one acres near the current Exhibition Grounds and Elbow River, paying in excess of \$100,000 for it.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Although Dr. Lindsay already had a lovely house at the corner of Center street and Fifth Avenue, he decided to build a new home on Park Hill on the east side of the Elbow River overlooking Calgary. The lot he acquired had many large sandstone blocks on it from the city's first Knox Presbyterian Church. He used them to start construction of a 4000 square foot home in 1913. It was not long before the weight of the stones and girders were too great for the sandy hill. The foundations began to crack.

33. Lindsay, Neville J. Calgary Herald, May 15, 1889. Also, see the profile of Dr. Henry George.

34. Lindsay, Neville J. Calgary Herald, September 11, 1889.

35. Jamieson, Heber C. *Early Medicine in Alberta*, page 199, AMA, 1947.

36. Stanley, George D. "Dr. Neville Lindsay", page 7-8.

37. Neatby, Hilda "The Medical Profession in the North-West Territories", Saskatchewan History 2: 1-15, 1949 or CACHB 14(4): 73-77, February 1950 and Part 2. One of the physicians may have been the second Dean of the Manitoba Medical College (Dr. Good), who followed the Trail of 1898. For more details on Dr. Good see Ross Mitchell's "Manitoba Surgical Pioneers: James Kerr and H.H. Chown", in the CJS 3: 281-285, July 1960 and "Manitoba's Medical School", CACHB 12(4): 66-68, February 1948.

38. McDougall, Gerald, Harris, Fiona C. *Medical Clinics and Physicians of Southern Alberta*, page 194, 1991.

39. Lindsay, Neville J. Unsigned biographical notes, page 1.

40. Lindsay, Neville J. Calgary Albertan, March 2, 1911. Four acres were left, as reported by T. Moore in the Calgary Albertan, February 3, 1966.

After an investment of twenty thousand dollars, construction was stopped.⁽⁴¹⁾ The estate was acquired by the City in 1936 for tax arrears. The partially built home, known locally as “Lindsay’s Folly” was demolished in 1955.⁽⁴²⁾ All that remained of Dr. Lindsay’s dream home was the attachment of his name to the Lindsay Park aquatic center. That was lost when the City renamed it the Talisman Center in 2002.⁽⁴³⁾



The Last Spike, November 8, 1885 4-7

After his death on December 17, 1925, friends recalled that Dr. Lindsay was a great raconteur. “Everyone liked him. He was a feature of optimism and vision for the city’s future. He was a booster for

Calgary and always tried to put his ideals into action. He was always a friend to all. The sick found a friend in him and to the healthy he was a pleasant companion. He was one of the most straightforward and respectable citizens I have ever known.”⁽⁴⁴⁾

The Lindsays had four children. The oldest son, Edwin (born 1881), became a surgeon and was studying in Austria when WWI broke out. He married an English girl after the War and stayed in England. He passed away in 1981 at age ninety-nine. By then he was the oldest practitioner in England. Edwin recalled being taken in William van Horne’s rail car to Craigellachie for the driving of the last spike in 1885.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The Lindsay’s second son, Neville Hungerford (born 1885), became an accountant in Calgary and a third son, Lionel Lodge (born 1892), became a lawyer in Calgary. Florence Hazel (born 1896) married and became Mrs. L. A. Walsh. Mrs. Lindsay, who was born June 12, 1848, passed away on December 27, 1937 at age eighty.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Related Profiles: Brett, Lafferty, George, Mackid

Related Perspectives: The First CMA Convention in “Alberta” (1889)

Key Words: Second CPR train into Calgary, early Alderman, house calls, Indian, CPR, NWMP contracts, Yukon in 1898, Lindsay’s Folly, Lindsay Park



Mrs. N.J. Lindsay, Calgary Herald June 21, 1934 4-8

41. Kooyman, Susan Calgary Herald, Sunday Magazine, October 11, 1987.
 42. Southam, B. Calgary Herald, October 17, 1985. Also noted in the Calgary Albertan, March 31, 1950.
 43. Lau, M. Calgary Herald, page E2, E5, Saturday, March 30, 2002.
 44. (Lindsay, Neville J.) Pioneer of Calgary, Passes to Last Rest. Calgary Herald, Thursday December 17, 1925.
 45. Peach, Jack Calgary Herald Saturday, September 3, 1983.
 46. Lindsay, Florence M. Death takes Calgary Pioneer, Calgary Herald, December 27, 1937