

Australia's Poet

Adam Lindsay Gordon

1833-1870

Described as 'Australia's Poet' on his memorial in Westminster Abbey, Adam's life lurched from opportunity and privilege to penury and despair. Well-educated in England, he went to Australia in 1853 and became a trooper in the mounted police, and then a horse breaker.

A substantial inheritance allowed him to become a gentleman steeplechaser.

Marriage, a period in politics and two volumes of poetry followed.

But Adam's prospects for a settled and comfortable and settled life were confounded.

Much of his fortune was lost in bad investments, he suffered serious riding injuries, his livery stables in Victoria burned down and his only daughter Annie died before she was one.

Adam attempted to restore his fortunes as a writer for magazines and through an attempt to win control of the Esslemont estate back in Scotland, which failed.

The poetic triumph of his life was a volume called *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*.

The morning after it was published he took a stroll along the beach near his home in Brighton, Australia, and shot himself.

- Read the Oxford DNB biography here: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/public/dnb/11014.html>.