The Naming of Colonel Light Gardens

"Colonel Light Gardens" to be name of the parade ground.

To the Secretary for Lands.

17/12/37

To the Governor.

Committee.

Colonel Light Gardens
Historical Society Inc.
The Naming of Colonel Light Gardens

This document has been prepared to provide readers with access to the source material dealing with the naming of the suburb of Colonel Light Gardens and its streets.

Whilst the image quality of many of the original documents is poor, they have been included to allow access to source material.

If you are aware of further material on this topic, please contact:
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Colonel Light Gardens.

Information for this document has been drawn from the following sources:
Bank SA.
City of Mitcham Local History Collection.
SA Geographical Names Board.
State Library of South Australia.

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The suburb of Colonel Light Gardens lies to the east and west of a major arterial road, Goodwood Road. The area to the east of Goodwood Road was used for farming and was known as Grange Farm. Grange Farm was owned for many years by the wealthy South Australian landowner, William Tennant Mortlock, of Martindale Hall, Mintaro.

An obituary published in The Adelaide Chronicle 23/8/1913 following the death of Mr Mortlock contained the following extract:

"The Minutes were sold. At the present time a scheme is under consideration for the subdivision of 300 acres of land known as Grange Farm. It is situated between Goodwood and Mitcham, and has been held by the Mortlocks for over 50 years. The new site for a suburb will be known as Mortlock Park."

This information is confirmed in the Minutes of Evidence of Mr D V Wilson before the Royal Commission on Land Purchases (Grange Farm) SA Parliamentary Paper 57 of 1918 p6

22. To the Commissioner: I wish to state that I do not believe any man in South Australia could have bought the land from Mr. Mortlock for less than £50 an acre. Mr. Mortlock's idea was to get me to use the business through, and that there should be a township on the land to perpetuate his name.

From 1 April 1915, Grange Farm was used by the Commonwealth Government as a military training camp. It was referred to as the Mitcham Military Camp or the Mitcham Army Camp.

The Trustees for the Estate of W T Mortlock sold Grange Farm to the South Australian Government in June 1915 and the sale included the requirement that "Mr Mortlocks name will be associated in some prominent way with the Town Planning Scheme in connection with the property".

On 13 July 1915 reference was made on two occasions in the SA Parliament to the sale.

SAPD 13/7/1915 p38

STATE HOMES AT MORTLOCK PARK.

Mr. SMEATON (for Mr. Ryan) asked upon notice—Is it the intention of the Government to have homes erected on the recently acquired estate, Mortlock Park, with a view of letting them?

The TREASURER—The matter has not yet been definitely settled.

PURCHASE OF MORTLOCK ESTATE.

The Hon. L. O’LOUGHLIN asked upon notice—Under what Act or authority has the land at Mitcham, known as Mortlock’s, been purchased?

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS—Excess warrant approved by Cabinet.
Charles Reade, the South Australian Government Town Planner, used the description “Mitcham Garden Suburb” and “proposed Garden Suburb at Mitcham” in his letter to the Attorney-General, of 12 January 1917.

Reade, the designer of the proposed suburb used the description “Mitcham Garden Suburb” when he released his preliminary plans and bird’s-eye view at the First Australian Town Planning and Housing Conference and Exhibition held in Adelaide in October 1917. Reade co-organised this conference.

Reade again used the term “Mitcham Garden Suburb” in a memorandum dated 29 July 1919 in which he set out the administrative framework for the proposed suburb.
The use of the term “Mitcham Garden Suburb” to describe the area continued until the Mitcham Garden Suburb Bill commenced its second reading in the SA Parliament on 18 November 1919. Debate on the Bill included debate on the proposed name of the suburb, Mitcham Garden Suburb. A number of Members of Parliament were concerned that the name was similar to other settled areas of Mitcham.

Mr. Price—Why call it Mitcham Garden Suburb?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—That is fairly obvious, as it happens to be in the present district council of Mitcham. I move the second reading.

I am not altogether enamoured of the name of this suburb. Mitcham is an old and honored name, but we think of Mitcham as a little town lying at the foot of the hills, and we should not mix it up with anything else. Why not select a name which would be euphonious and perhaps descriptive of the place itself. Mr. Crosby suggested to me that some mellifluous native name should be given. When the Clapham railway station was opened the late Mr. Price made the mistake of giving the owner of the land the right to name the station. I am glad the Railways Commissioner has agreed that when the new station is opened there it will be given the name of Springbank, because Clapham is not a pretty name, nor is it at all descriptive of the locality.

I do not agree with the name of Mitcham Garden Suburb. The district council of Mitcham covers quite a large area, going right through Blackwood and Coromandel Valley, taking in Springbank, Westbourne Park, Kingwood, and other places. We have Mitcham proper, Upper and Lower Mitcham, and now we are proposing to have a garden suburb of Mitcham. It would be much more satisfactory to give this particular area another name.

Mr. Edwards—What name would you suggest?

Mr. PRICE—It would be a good idea to have a good sounding native name.
The Naming of Colonel Light Gardens

Debate on the following day explored a number of alternatives. In the end they passed the Bill to create the suburb, but it was still without a name.

MITCHAM GARDEN SUBURB BILL.
In Committee. (See page 1881.)
Clause 29—"Act to apply notwithstanding Real Property Act."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The question of the name of the suburb was raised in this Chamber last night. I have considered the matter, and two suggestions have been made, one that it should be called Gallipoli, and the other Allenby. I am inclined to accept the name of Allenby.

Capt. DENNY—I hope the Minister will not think of adopting the name of "Allenby." Although General Allenby is a very brilliant cavalry officer, he referred to the Australian soldiers in derogatory and insulting terms, and I feel sure no returned soldier would care to live in a town named after him.

Mr. Petherick—What about "Monash"?

Capt. DENNY—There is a great deal to be said in favor of that.

Mr. SMEATON—When the great drive began in Palestine everybody thought highly of Gen. Allenby, but since then things have happened which make it undesirable to use his name for a place where returned soldiers are to reside. We should try to find a good Australian name. I understand from Mr. Petherick that there is a native name, "Carinjah," which means "a pretty look-out." It would be a pity to rush the matter through to-night. The Government might give the House a selection of names.

Mr. PETHERICK—I would suggest "Carinjah," but I have not verified the meaning mentioned by the last speaker.

Mr. PONDER—"Allenby" is too much like "Allendale," and the latter name occurs twice already in South Australia. We should be able to find a more euphonious native title than that suggested by Mr. Petherick. We might postpone the matter until tomorrow.
The word Mitcham was dropped and the Act became the Garden Suburb Act.

An Act to provide for the Planning, Laying Out, and Development of a Garden Suburb at Mitcham, and for other purposes.

[Assented to, November 27th, 1919.]

BE it Enacted by the Governor of the State of South Australia, with the advice and consent of the Parliament thereof, as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the “Garden Suburb Act, 1919.” Short title.

The plan which was presented as the Second Schedule was reworked as “Garden Suburb, Adelaide”

After the Advertiser carried a story on the debate in the SA Parliament on possible names for the Suburb, a student from Adelaide High School, Doreen Brobble, wrote to the Attorney-General suggesting the name “Cavell” after the famous nurse of World War I.
On 21 November 1919, L. Shields of Edwardstown East wrote suggesting the suburb should be called Hopetoun and the boundaries extended to include Edwardstown East!

21.11.19

Hope Street
Edwardstown East

...garden suburb

may I make a suggestion that the name of Hopetoun would be a good name for the Mitcham Garden suburb. It could be called so after Lord Hopetoun. I would also suggest that Edwardstown East be included in the suburb as it is too far from Edwardstown that it is very misleading. It is in Hope Ward. I believe of the Mitcham Council

I remain

L. W. Shields
There were other suggestions and these prompted Reade to write to the Attorney-General on 7 January 1920. Reade commented on each suggestion. He then proposed "Light Garden Suburb". Reade's suggested suburb name was supported in a hand written note on the letter by Henry Barwell, the Attorney-General and Minister Controlling Town Planning.

"FORUM for the Hon. Attorney General from the Town Planner re name for Garden Suburb at Kitcham."

Names have been suggested for the Garden Suburb at Kitcham as follows:

1. "Hopetown" - after Lord Hopetown (ex-governor of Victoria)
   and his Governor General of the Commonwealth.
2. "Caivel" - in memory of Nurse Cavell,
3. "Glen Carr" - in commemoration of the late Mr. Harr Smith,
4. "Gallipoli" - in memory of the Anzacs,
5. "Light" - in memory of the first Town Planner of Adelaide.

The name "Gallipoli" has already been appropriated for a proposed Garden Suburb on the Port Road.

Suggestion three (3) might more fittingly be associated with the subdivision of Torrens Park.

In selecting a name suitable for the Garden Suburb, it is important that nothing should be done to encourage any possible misconception as to the nature and purpose of the undertaking - more particularly to guard against any impression that the area is to be used exclusively for the housing of returned soldiers and sailors. Military traditions might be observed in the naming of certain avenues and squares, but in view of the fact that the Garden Suburb is the pioneer venture seeking to illustrate the advantages of Town Planning as well as the housing of all classes of the community, it is suggested in the circumstances that the most suitable name would be that of -

Light Garden Suburb

In memory of the Pioneer Town Planner of South Australia.

Charles Reade

Town Planner.

7th January, 1920.
The Chairman of the South Australian Town Planning and Housing Association wrote to the Attorney-General on 5 May 1920 suggesting “William Light Garden Suburb ... as it represents the logical continuation of the work of the pioneer Town Planner of South Australia”.

The objects of the Association include:

1. Propagation of any other Town
2. Public works and improvements
3. General welfare in connection with the above
4. Preservation of parks and open spaces
5. Care, repair, and maintenance

South Australian Town Planning and Housing Association.

Hon. R. N. Darwell, V.P.,
Attorney General,
ADELAIDE.

Dear Sir,

HAVING THE GARDEN SUBURB.

In pursuance of my letter of 29th ult. concerning the Garden Suburb at Keswick, I now desire on behalf of the above Association to ask the new Government (of which you are the responsible head) if they will review the question of the naming of the area.

My Association understands that the name "Keswick" was merely a term of convenience pending a decision in respect to a permanent designation. It was stated recently in the press that the late Government proposed to adopt the name "Cavel", but, in the absence of any official pronouncement, we desire to ask that any such suggestion will not be followed.

In selecting a name appropriate to this, the first modern Garden Suburb in South Australia, it is felt that nothing should be done to encourage an existing misconception that the area is to be used exclusively for the housing of returned sailors and soldiers, or other purely patriotic purposes.

Whilst there is nothing to prevent famous military traditions, associated with Australian sailors and soldiers, being preserved in the naming of avenues or squares, or to appropriately honor the brave English women who gave their life for their country, the Association regards the Garden Suburb as the pioneer venture seeking to illustrate the advantages of modern town planning and housing, and as such is intended for the accommodation of all classes of the community, civilians as well as soldiers.

This being so, I desire on behalf of this Association to suggest that the Garden Suburb be known as the "Colonel Light Garden Suburb."

Yours obediently,

[Signature]
This comment is similar to Reade’s report “Planning and Development of Towns and Cities in South Australia (SAPP No.63 of 1919) in which Reade quotes from the 1917 Official Volume of Proceedings of the First Australian Town Planning Conference and Exhibition. Reade was the co-organiser of that Conference and edited its papers.

“Modern town planning may appear to be a new science to South Australia, but it has a distinguished precedent in the work of her pioneers.

“In urging upon Parliament and public its indispensability to civic life, the town planners are merely asking for the rehabilitation of the earlier system adapted to meet the urgent needs as well as the future requirements of the towns and cities of South Australia forever associated with the name and prestige of Colonel Light.

“What finer monument is there to the memory of genius than the logical continuation of its great and imperishable work?”

The SA Town Planning and Housing Association’s *Light Journal*, June 1920 edition, provides further insight into the use of the working name of Mitcham Garden Suburb, the alternative names suggested and the Association’s preferred name of William Light Garden Suburb.

“The Garden Suburb Act, 1919.”

The passage of “The Garden Suburb Act, 1919,” is another important result from the propaganda maintained by the Association over a series of years in favor of modern housing and garden suburb practice as distinct from the garden city proper.

The name “Mitcham” Garden Suburb was understood to be a term of convenience pending a decision in respect to a permanent name. It was stated recently in the Press that the late Government proposed to adopt the name “Cavell,” but in the absence of any official pronouncement, the new Government has now been asked to review the matter and give a decision.

In selecting a name appropriate to this, the first modern garden suburb in South Australia, it is felt that nothing should be done to encourage an existing misconception that the area is to be used exclusively for the housing of returned sailors and soldiers.

Whilst there is nothing to prevent famous military traditions associated with Australian sailors and soldiers being preserved in the naming of avenues or squares, or to appropriately honor the brave English woman who gave her life for her country, the Association regards the garden suburb as the pioneer venture seeking to illustrate the advantages of modern town planning and housing, and as such is intended for the accommodation of all classes of the community—civilians as well as soldiers. This being so, it has been suggested to the Government that the garden suburb representing it does the logical continuation of the work of the pioneer town planner (Colonel Light) of South Australia, should, in the circumstances, be called the “William Light Garden Suburb.”

**The Register** newspaper of 15 June 1920 refers to the proposed suburb as the “Garden Suburb” and the “model garden suburb at Mitcham.”

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**Attractive Scheme in Preparation.**

Town planning has been a long time coming in South Australia—far too long! It has had to pass the stage of prejudice and doubt, and meet the challenge that it was idyllic, just something to be admired on paper, but with an indefinite distance into the attractive future. There are still lingering shadows of bias across the bright landscape of a great, practical, and necessary movement, and though rapid progress is checked by vital financial considerations, and the attendant difficulties of state reform, South Australia has need to be proud of what has been achieved since the Government Town Planner (Mr. C. R. Rendel) came here, and won recognition of an important principle in civic economy. The establishment of a special department, which today is one of the busiest in the official group, and the advancing support being given to what is a combination of humanitarian and picturesque legislation for the modern laying out of towns, are testimony enough to increasing influence.

When the model garden suburb at Mitcham shall have been completed, the people will be able to see for themselves what a triumph for sanity and enjoyment this movement really is. A bird’s-eye view of the preliminary design which has been prepared by Mr. Rendel gives promise of a most charming and yet utilitarian accomplishment.
The Advertiser newspaper on 29 June 1920 carried a short note from a reader suggesting “Wirraparinga”, the “native name of Brownhill Creek”, even though Brownhill Creek does not pass through the suburb.

With the land soon to be released, the Garden Suburb Commissioner wrote to the Secretary, Commissioner of Crown Lands and expressed a view that “William Light Garden Suburb” was too long and he suggested “Light Gardens” or “Dernacourt.”

To the Secretary,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

It will be necessary at an early date to prepare By-laws under The Garden Suburb Act applicable to the Mitcham Garden Suburb, and it would be a distinct advantage to have the name of the Suburb first selected by His Excellency the Governor in order to avoid alterations later on.

The Chairman of the Town Planning Association addressed the Hon. the Premier upon the subject in a letter dated 5th May 1920, in which the name “WILLIAM LIGHT’S GARDEN SUBURB” is suggested.

While it may be considered desirable to perpetuate the name of the pioneer Town Planner of this State, the name as proposed is somewhat lengthy for practical purposes, and I would respectfully suggest that it would be amended to “LIGHT GARDENS” or as an alternative, that the suburb be named “DERNACOURT” in allusion to the very important battle in which the S. Australian Troops were engaged (April 5, 1918) and also in view of the fact that the village of DERMANCOURT has been “adopted” by South Australia.

The objection may be advanced that in the event of less friendly relations between Great Britain and France occurring, the name would perhaps be then undesirable, but so far as can be anticipated, this appears to be a remote contingency, and has not been considered of any weight in the adoption of other French names of places in this State.

C. T. Harris
Garden Suburb Commissioner
31st March 1920
The Attorney-General Henry Barwell noted that “Colonel Light Gardens to be the name of the Garden Suburb”. This was probably the result of a Cabinet meeting of 18 April 1921.
The sales brochure released for the initial land sales in mid-1921 provides an official explanation for the name chosen for the suburb.

A Model Garden Suburb
“Colonel Light Gardens”
Comfort, Convenience and Beauty

A Beautiful track of country, nestling at the foothills of Adelaide, has, owing to its peculiar suitability, been chosen by the South Australian Government for the purpose of establishing a modern Garden Suburb.

The design is the work of the Government Townplanner and embodies the most useful and proved ideals in present day townplanning practice.

In honour of the memory of Colonel Light, South Australia’s First Surveyor General, the suburb has been officially named “Colonel Light Gardens.”

Special attention is directed to the fact that the land is available for application by any person, and is not set apart for the exclusive purpose of settling returned soldiers.

The area of Colonel Light Gardens to the west of Goodwood Road became part of Colonel Light Gardens in 1924. The bulk of the land was purchased from the Estate of Shobbrooks and a smaller block was purchased from A. Hann. The western area of Colonel Light Gardens has been the subject of a number of attempts to rename it Daw Park. One attempt was made in the 1940s and further attempts were made in 1967 and in the 1970s. This appears to have been for the convenience of the postal authority. The Garden Suburb Commissioner strenuously opposed these moves.

Certain residents of the northern section of the former Grange Farm section adopted the term Reade Park after the commencement of the Thousand Homes Scheme in 1924 in other parts of Colonel Light Gardens. This was intended to create a distinction between the areas of private development and the Thousand Homes area. The major reserve located in the northern section is the home of the Reade Park Bowling Club, the Reade Park Tennis Club and the Reade Park Croquet Club.

The term Reade Park was not officially recognised as a suburb or a section of Colonel Light Gardens and its use steadily declined.
Street Names

Henry Barwell, the SA Attorney-General, in a speech at the Second Australian Town Planning Conference held in Brisbane in 1918 described a “Broadway” and spoke of the plan having a Parkway Avenue encircling the suburb.

Bold, at the same conference, provided an explanation of the term “Parkway”.

4. Parkways and Boulevards.

Parkways and boulevards are described as pleasure drives which are not in parks, and are necessary as a means of making the parks accessible to the people and of connecting one park with another. They are of ample width, from 1 1/2 to 2 chains upwards, and the space not required for traffic purposes is laid out in lawns, flower gardens, plantations, shrubberies, etc. They form an attractive feature of many American cities, and any person privileged to drive along these beautiful parkways cannot fail to be an ardent advocate of such an admirable method of city beautification and recreation.

The parkways frequently intersect the populous centres, and enable many citizens, who would otherwise rarely see the beauties of nature, to come into daily contact with parklike surroundings.

The Register newspaper of 15 June 1920 provided this description.
The explanations of many of the other street names of the eastern section of the suburb can be seen in an undated document from the Garden Suburb Commissioners files. As not all the names were used, it was probably used as a list of possible street names to choose from.

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**HISTORICAL**

Prince George Parade
Sturt Avenue
Flinders Avenue
Freeling Avenue
Frome Avenue

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**Australian Camps in England**

Salisbury Crescent - Tidworth Crescent
Kandahar Crescent

- English Towns signifying "Camp" from "Caster" "Cester" - Chester  
  - Chester Avenue
  - Lancaster Avenue
  - Winchester Avenue
  - Rochester Avenue
  - Doncaster Avenue
  - Manchester Avenue

- Entrance to Gardens
  - Ludgate Circus
  - Tuckadilly Circus
  - Oxford Circus

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**Business Centres**

- The Strand
- Bond Street

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**English Town Names**

- Windsor Place
- York Place
- Cambridge Crescent
- Stafford Place
- Dorset Avenue
- Essex Avenue
- Hastings Road
- Kent Road

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**Other Names**

- West Parkway
- Broadway
- Rosemont Street
- East Parkway
- Wattlebury Road
- The Grove
Bond Street was renamed in May 1967 as a section of Salisbury Crescent. Stafford Place which lay between West Parkway and Goodwood Road was renamed Windsor Ave. The street names for the 1924 extension of the suburb to the west of Goodwood Road relate to events in the life of Colonel William Light. An undated clipping from The Advertiser provides an account of the origins.

The streets referred to are all found in the western section of Colonel Light Gardens. The newspaper clipping incorrectly limits the Thousand Homes to the western section of Colonel Light Gardens. Only 332 of the homes were built on this area, 363 built in the area of Colonel Light Gardens to the east of Goodwood Rd and 305 were built in Adelaide’s western suburbs. A more comprehensive description of events in William Light’s life can be found in the Introduction Notes to David Elder’s book, William Light’s Brief Journal and Australian Diaries. However, this book does not provide us with an understanding of the origin of Martlesham to confirm the report in the Advertiser. The later book by Geoffrey Dutton and David Elder, Melbourne University Press 1991 provides a slightly different version of Martlesham from that provided in the Advertiser article.

The relationship of Light to these street names is summarised as:

William Light’s guardian George Doughty, who had bought the estate of Thetberton in 1776, had married Anne Goodwin of Martlesham Hall near Saxmundham, and she brought that property into the family. William was educated and treated as one of the family in Thetberton and Martlesham, and his father remitted money to Doughty through his agent Fairlie in Calcutta. He was lucky to be in the hands of such good people as the ‘Sweet Anne and honest George’ of Francis Light’s letters. Doughty had been appointed High Sheriff of Suffolk in the year of William’s arrival, 1793, and he was also a lieutenant in the militia, which in those days meant that he was a man of some property. He was a big, country-faced squire, kind and genial,
Richmond - Light’s friend, the Duke of Richmond,
Penang- In Malaysia where Light lived with his father in Malay until he was 6 years old,
Rozells - Light’s mother Martinha Rozells with whom Light’s father “cohabited”;
Corunna - in Spain, where Light was wounded by a bullet in battle,
Clyde - the first ship on which Light served,
Rapid - the ship which conveyed Light to Australia.
Martlesham - from Martlesham Hall where Light lived in England with his guardians,
Light Place - named after Light.

Whilst these street names all relate to William Light’s life, the early plans for the subdivision of the western portion appear to have proposed aboriginal street names. The lending records of the State Bank provide the following:
proposed Parilla Ave now Rozells Ave,
proposed Myponga Ave now Corunna Ave,
proposed Echunga Ave now Richmond Ave,
proposed Karoonda Ave now Penang Ave,
proposed Aldinga Cres now Martlesham Cres.