

LAWSON PARK

DEDICATION OF THE VICTOR MONGER MEMORIAL GATES.

There was a very large attendance yesterday afternoon at the official opening of Lawson Park by the Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw (Minister for Lands), and the Dedication of the Victor Monger Memorial Gates, this ceremony being performed by Mr. W. H. Simpson.

There were many visitors from other towns present, and children from the Grenfell I.H.S. and Convent were also in attendance.

The gates when fully completed will be a very attractive addition to the town. Swinging on massive brick pillars, the handsome iron gates are surmounted by a double metal arch bearing the words "Lawson Park." The entrance has also been levelled off and gravelled, and altogether the entrance is a credit to those concerned in the planning and completing of such.

On the dais erected for the occasion were the Mayor of Grenfell (Mr. J. Thompson), Mrs. Monger, Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw (Minister for Lands), Major Reid, M.L.A., Mr. R. Butler (President of the Grenfell Sub-branch R.S. & S.I.L.A.), Cr. Pereira, Mr. W. H. Simpson, Ald. A. Rabbets (Young), Mr. Darch (Town Clerk), Mr. J. Eagar (member of the old Weddin C.C.), Mr. and Mrs. W. Monger and the Misses Monger, Mr. and Mrs. R. Monger, Miss Hazel Monger, Master C. Monger, Mrs. Graham and Mrs. Anderson (sisters of the late Mr. J. Monger), Mr. E. G. Rumble (brother-in-law).

Mr. Moore (President, Grenfell D.C.A.) was among those present, also members of the old Weddin C.C. and many present-day cricketers.

Proceedings opened with the National Anthem played by the Grenfell

Band, under the baton of Mr. W. Howard Gray.

The Mayor said it was a very pleasing duty for him as his first official act to preside that afternoon at such two very important ceremonies—the opening of Lawson Park and the dedication of the Victor Monger Memorial Gates. He extended a hearty greeting to the Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw, Major Reid, the visitors, and members of the Monger family. As the occasion was the first at which he presided as Mayor he hoped they would forgive him any shortcomings. He took the opportunity of thanking those who elected him as alderman and to the aldermen for electing him as Mayor. He trusted that at the end of his term the town-people would still have confidence in him, and that they would be able to say "well done."

Apologies were read from Hon. Hugh Main, Hon. V. C. Thorby, Ald. Bradley and Sinclair (who were at Cowra), Mr. A. Monger and Revs. N. Cooke and J. S. Paine.

Major Reid said he was very pleased to be associated with the very important ceremonies that afternoon, and that the Hon. E. A. Buttenshaw as Minister for Lands and representative of the State Government was to open the Lawson Park. It was fitting that one who took such a great part in sport should have the privilege of opening the sports ground which would be a great benefit to the present and future generations. Sport was very beneficial and made for a generous disposition and for better citizenship. The Council was wise to acquire the area, and he was glad to be associated with them; he hoped they would have many very pleasant times on their new ground.

Ald. Rabbets (Young) said he was very thankful to receive the invitation to be present as a representative of Young. When he heard of the date of the opening he determined to be present whatever happened, as he

date of the opening he determined to be present whatever happened, as he had a warm friendship for all members of the Monger family. No one did more for cricket in Grenfell than the late Victor Monger. He was glad Grenfell had acquired another sports ground, and trusted it would be the meeting place for old friends, and that many good contests would be played there. He congratulated Ald. Thompson upon being appointed Mayor, and also feelingly offered him his sincerest sympathy.

Cr. Pereira also referred to the great asset the new ground would be to Grenfell, and said the people should be proud of such, and that it also was named after the great Australian poet who was born there. Now that the ground was there it was up to them to assist in improving same.

Mr. James Eagar said it was a pleasure for him to be present, though the occasion was tinged with sadness, the passing of Victor Monger coming as a great shock to his many friends. It was 48 years ago that he played in a cricket match with the late Victor Monger, when he and Jim Simpson (Weddin) put on 21 runs. From then on he had been closely associated with the Monger family. There was no more honorable man than his late friend, whose memory was cherished by a host of friends. The ground offered splendid opportunities to the present and coming generations and the game would do much to mould them into good citizens. He would long remember the present occasion, and was very grateful for the invitation to be present.

Mr. W. H. Simpson said he felt particularly honored in being asked to dedicate the gates erected to the

memory of the late Victor Monger, who had been a very old friend and a true sport and comrade. He probably knew the late gentleman longer than anyone in Grenfell, as he and Victor were born at Goulburn where

than anyone in Grenfell, as he and Victor, were born at Goulburn where the families were very close friends, and later on, strange to say, the families had settled close to one another at Grenfell. He was a worthy son of honored parents, and had a good home training, being taught, like all members of the family, to play the game, which he did. His memory was worth commemorating, and as the young people passed through the gates they should remember him to whose memory the gates were erected and to pattern their lives upon the example he set. He had pleasure in unveiling the tablet, and in dedicating the gates, and in presenting the key to Mrs. Monger to retain for all time. He concluded by handing the gates over to the Mayor for safe keeping. He also thanked Mr. Darch, Messrs. J. Neagle and Mr. D. Neagle, and Mr. Eppleston for time put in in endeavouring to have the gates completed and the ceremony arranged for that day.

The Mayor said he was pleased to accept the gates on behalf of the Council, and said that such would be well looked after and maintained.

The inscription on the left hand gate post reads as follows:—

MEMORIAL GATES

to the memory of

VICTOR MONGER

(Cricketer and Sportsman).

Erected by his many Friends and Admirers.

5th December, 1934.

The Hon E. A. Buttenshaw said it was, indeed, with very great pleasure that I was able, in my official capacity as Minister for Lands, to authorise the purchase of the area of 12 acres 2 roods 29 perches embraced within Lawson Park for the purpose of public recreation. As you all probably know my Department provided the sum of £300 for the purchase of this area, the care, control and management of which has been vested in the Council of the Municipality

agement of which has been vested in the Council of the Municipality of Grenfell under the provisions of Section 344 of the Local Government Act. You have here a very fine area indeed for the various kinds of athletic recreation, and I feel sure that the public of Grenfell and district will co-operate with the Municipal Council in maintaining and improving the area from time to time for the purpose for which it was reserved. One of my very pleasant but exacting and difficult duties is to provide land for public recreation, either by way of reserving Crown land or acquiring alienated land by purchase for public recreation, parks, etc. It is opportune to mention, therefore, that during the term of the present State Government, there have been reserved or dedicated for public recreation in the eastern division no less than 200 areas aggregating 17,115 acres; in the central division 39 areas aggregating 1397 acres, and in the western division 9 areas aggregating 531 acres. In all, therefore, 248 areas totalling 19,043 acres have been set apart for public recreation in the eastern, central and western divisions. With very restricted finance and the minimum of Crown land available or becoming available suitable for public recreation, I am sure this Government can be proud of its achievements in this respect. I dare say there is no one in the community who realises more the value of healthy, athletic recreation, for I think I have played almost every class of game favoured by Australians. The great need to-day is not only for bush land reserves, but for level playing fields for the younger generation, who naturally desire to play games rather than be spectators. The amount voted by Parliament for park acquisition during the current financial year is £10,000, whereas a sum of £250,000 would hardly be sufficient to meet all applications for park acquisition which have been favourably reported upon

have been favourably reported upon to me. I might say that the Field Officers of my Department have standing instructions to give due consideration, when dealing with the classification of Crown lands, to the question of providing for the reservation of forest clad gorges and other places of natural beauty which might in the public interest be retained, particularly from a tourists' point of view. I would like to congratulate you upon your selection of a name for this park—that is, Lawson Park, which doubtless is intended to perpetuate the memory of the late Henry Lawson, whose name will forever live for the typical Australian sentiment expressed in his verses. The sum of £25 was made available during June last to assist in the cost of improving this park. Mr. Buttenshaw further stated that William Monger (father of Victor), was born at Feltham, Middlesex, England, in 1840, and came to Brisbane in 1868. He reached Sydney in 1871 and married Miss Skinner, King's County, Ireland. A gardener by profession, he for seven years held the position of head gardener to the Hon. W. P. Faithfull at Springsdale, Goulburn. In 1879 he selected land at Weddin, and brought his wife and family by horse and dray from Goulburn on 16th January, 1880. The journey occupied eight days. The first wheat crop of four acres was reaped with a sickle, threshed with a ball and cleaned in the wind. In 1884, in conjunction with Andrew Shaw, he became the owner of the stripper and winnowing at Weddin,

and they had many visitors to see the wonderful machinery. The drought of 1888 proved a severe trial to the Monger family, water having to be carted from the Company's Dam, Grenfell, a distance of eight miles. His wife died in 1890, which was a heavy blow to the family. William Monger was an ardent follower of politics, a keen politician, and an

politics, a keen politician, and an ardent follower of the late R. M. Vaughan. He was a keen cricketer, and father of the well known family which helped to make the famous Weddin cricket team. The names of the family are Allie, William, Reginald, Cissie and Minnie. He died in 1907 in his 68th year. He concluded by stating how pleased he was to be present to pay a tribute to the memory of Victor Monger, and congratulated the Council upon the forethought in naming the park after the Australian poet.

Mr. Buttenshaw then unveiled the tablet which bears the inscription:—

THIS PARK
Was Officially Opened by
E. A. BUTTENSHAW
(Minister for Lands),
5th December, 1934.

Mr. J. Eagar responded on behalf of Mrs. Monger, and members of the Monger family, who asked him to express their sincere gratitude and appreciation for the way in which the late Victor had been honored, and for the kindly words spoken that afternoon.

Mrs. Monger then opened the gates and led by the Grenfell Band the school children and public entered.

The remainder of the afternoon was given over to a cricket match—some of the local cricketers and a ladies' team, which comprised some formidable hitters.

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Results of sports:—

Lawson Park Championship, 50 yards: Ald. W. Douglass 1, Ald. J. V. Thompson (Mayor), 2. Won by inches only.

Consolation Stakes, 50 yards.—A. E. Maher 1, W. Thompson 2. Won on protest from "Bega" Howard.

Moffitt Stakes, boys under 10 years: Stan. Bensley 1, Ian Carter 2.

Boys 10 to 14 years, 50 yards: Arthur Nicholls 1, Ivan Caunt 2.

Girls under 10: Laurel Bean 1, Lola Blowes 2.

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Girls under 14: Eunice Caunt 1, J. Hilder 2.

Cricketers' Race, 50 yards: R. Hargreaves 1, J. Sherry 2.

Road Race, 2 miles: Fred. Murray 1, Fred. Nicholls 2.

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The response to the Victor Monger Memorial Appeal was very generous, and the success of the appeal was in a very large measure due to the enthusiasm of Mr. Wit. Aston (hon. secretary). From the very first meeting to consider the matter he was on the warpath and he never missed an opportunity of collecting a sub. Mr. Aston reports that the subscriptions were given with a very generous spirit.