



Masons & Musicians—The Eady Family

W Bro Arthur Gordon Eady (Master 1920)

W Bro Arthur Eady (Master 1925)

W Bro William Kenneth Eady (Master 1927)

The Prince Of Wales Lodge No.1338



Kenneth was initiated in 1912, Gordon followed shortly thereafter and was initiated in 1914. Their Uncle Arthur was the last to join, being initiated in 1918.

In 1865, aboard the “Andrew Jackson”, the Eady family arrived in Auckland from Northhampton. Three brothers arrived with their parents – William born in 1854, Arthur born in 1856 and Lewis born in 1858. They were to make a major contribution to music in New Zealand.

Arthur Eady

Arthur formed and lead a small orchestra while running a music business in which he employed his brother Lewis. Lewis left his brother’s business and in 1884 formed his own company to import and sell pianos. That company still exists today as Lewis Eady Ltd.

Arthur was well known in Auckland and elsewhere as a musician and orchestral leader. He not only led the orchestra for the Choral Society and for Abbotts Opera House but also for the Theatre Royal and organised many recitals in the Rotunda in the Botanic Gardens. He frequently appeared with his orchestra at benefit concerts to raise funds for charitable and patriotic causes including the local fire brigade and the Auckland Rifle Volunteers.

In addition, Arthur and his orchestra were favoured by the then Governor Generals and he performed at many official functions including State Dinners, Governor’s Balls and Mayoral Functions.

In addition to leading the orchestra, Arthur also ran a successful music business which is recorded as one of the three most significant music publishers in New Zealand. Arthur arranged for the first commercial recordings of the Rotorua Maori Choir to be made by the Columbia Record Company. The business was formed around 1875 and operated from a store on the corner of Vulcan Lane and Queen Street and Arthur owned for many years the Gleaves building in Vulcan Lane.

Arthur married at the age of 49 to Melina Elizabeth Bergquist in 1905 and they had three children: Arthur Trevor born 1906, Edward Clifford born 1907 and Phyllis Mary born 1911. Arthur died in 1929 aged 72 at which time his business, Arthur Eady & Co, was being managed by his nephew, Arthur Gordon Eady.

His obituary stated “His natural graciousness and kindly disposition endeared him to a large circle within and without the commercial world and there are many who remember him for countless acts of charity and help”.

Arthur Gordon Eady

While both Arthur and Lewis Eady were talented musicians who ran their own music businesses, their older brother William, while an enthusiastic musician who was a member of the Choral Society for over 40 years, worked for the Auckland Harbour Board in which he rose to a senior position.



The Prince of Wales Lodge

www.englishmasons1338.org.nz

The Prince of Wales Lodge, No. 1338, under the United Grand Lodge of England, was founded on the 18th day of December, 1869, and consecrated on Thursday, the 28th day of September, 1871, at the Masonic Hotel, Princes Street, Auckland, by Bro. J.J. Fitzgibbon, Past Master of the Waitemata Lodge, No. 689, E.C.





William Eady married Isabella Walker in 1886 and they had four children; Arthur Gordon born 1888 (known as Gordon), William Kenneth born 1890 (known as Kenneth), Leila Isabel born 1893 and Richard Herbert Bruce born 1897.

Gordon, as he was known, joined his uncle Arthur's company and eventually took over management of the company.

It appears that not all was well with the family business relationships as in 1919 Arthur Eady & Co started a court case against Lewis Eady & Co over the use of the name "Eady's" in advertising. The case ended up in the Supreme Court where Arthur Eady & Co won.

In 1938, Gordon negotiated for Arthur Eady & Co to merge with another long established music business - Charles Begg & Co.

Gordon married Florence Lange in 1913. He died in 1947.

William Kenneth Eady

William Kenneth Eady, known as Kenneth, was the second son of Arthur Eady's older brother William.

He travelled to Europe in 1912 to study the music business, starting in England and then planning to continue through Germany, France and America. His plans were overtaken by events and he left Berlin only a few days before the declaration of World War One.

Back in England, as a former member of the A Company of Artillery Volunteers, he tried to join the Artillery but was recruited into the Ambulance service where he rose to the rank of Sergeant during training at Putney Bridge. He later applied for and was awarded a commission as Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery. He served in Mesopotamia where he was injured and invalided back to England where he served in various training depots until the end of the war.

On his return to New Zealand, Kenneth started a piano business in the Academy Building in Upper Queen Street in competition with his uncle, Lewis Eady. The business later moved to St Kevin's Arcade.

Kenneth died in 1945.

The Eadys and the Prince of Wales Lodge

Kenneth was the first member of the family to join the Prince of Wales Lodge, being initiated in 1912. His older brother Gordon followed shortly thereafter and was initiated in 1914. Their Uncle Arthur was the last to join, being initiated in 1918.

Gordon was the first to serve as master in 1920, followed by Arthur in 1925 and Kenneth in 1927. It seems Kenneth's term as master was delayed by his military service.

In the District, all three were appointed as DGStwd in the same year as they were installed as master. Gordon was appointed DGSwdB in 1922 and Kenneth appointed to the same rank in 1928. Arthur was appointed PDSGW in 1926 and PresDBB in 1927.

A G (Gordon) Eady presented the lodge with a set of tracing boards in 1920. Those tracing boards are still in use today.

Arthur Eady presented the lodge with a wand for the Director of Ceremonies in 1925. The wand is still in use today.

Sources:

Contemporary newspaper reports



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