



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

24 Duff Street,
ARNCLIFFE, 2205
November, 1975

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Friday Evening, November 21st, 1975, at 8 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Mrs.D. & Dr.Joan Hatton will entertain the Members with
Slides of their recent holiday, the title "From whence they
came." You will really enjoy this "Syllabus Item."

Supper Roster: Mrs.Farrar, Captain, and Mrs. Preddy, Misses
Russell, Row and Mrs. Gow.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. D. Sinclair,

President.

Phone 587.4555

Mrs. E. Wright,

Treas.& Soc.Sec.

Phone 599.4884

Mrs. E. Eardley,

Hon. Secretary.

Phone 59.8078

Mr. A. Ellis,

Research Officer.

Phone 587.1159

"Machines are beneficial to the degree that they eliminate the need for labour,
harmful to the degree that they eliminate the need for skill."

W.H.Auden, A Certain World.

A limited supply of the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford Eardley (reprinted by popular request) are now available, cost \$1.00 each, postage extra.

- Book 1. "The Early History of the Wolli Creek Valley"
- Book 2. "The Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"
- Book 3. "Thomas Saywell's Tramway, 1887 - 1914. Rockdale to Lady Robinsons Beach"
- Book 4. "The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tramway"

Also available are: (By the same Author)

- Book 5. "Heritage in Stone" (Limited Stocks)
- Book 6. "All Stations to Como" (Limited Stocks)
- Book 7. "The Early History. Tempe & The Black Creek Valley"

Contact Secretary 'Phone 59.8078.

OR Miss Otten 'Phone 59.4259.

ALSO Smith's Florist Shop, Tramway Arcade, Rockdale.

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It is with deep regret that we record the sudden death of Mrs. Emily Sinclair, Mother of our President, Mr. Don Sinclair, on 21st October.

A resident of the St. George District since her marriage almost sixty years ago, Mrs. Sinclair was an active member of this Society since its very early years, participating in all activities. Attendance at meetings was restricted by physical inability to 'mount the stairs' only in very recent years.

A school teacher by profession, Mrs. Sinclair will be long remembered for her friendly manner, intelligent interest and lively wit.

To her husband and to her son, Don, we extend our deepest sympathy.

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Miss Otten, Curator of "Lydham Hall", is in need of Ladies and/or Gentlemen to assist with the weekend roster. Visitors come from far and wide to see this lovely old Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate inspections. Ring Miss Otten, Phone 59.4259. Your call will be appreciated.

* * * * *

We would like to say "Thank you" to all who have either Donated or Loaned their precious "Bits and Pieces" to make Lydham Hall so interesting and attractive.

Mrs. Bloor, Arncliffe.	Circular white lace table cloth very old. Donated.
	Wedding Veil, hand embroidered, over 50 yrs. old. On loan.
	Wooden collar & stud box. Donated.
	Glass Perfume decanter. Donated.
Mrs. Barlow, Kingsgrove.	Navy Man's Pocket Watch, very old Donated.
Miss Smallwood, Arncliffe.	Stove Shovel, poker & ash scraper)
	2 Gaslight fittings, 1 globe & 1 mantle.)
	2 white light shades.)Donated.
	Fireplace Grate.)
	Sheet Music.)
Mrs. Kell, Bexley.	Beautiful Picture, hand embroidered Parrot on Black Velvet, made by her late Mother, 1888. Donated.
Mr. C. Simmler, Bexley.	Collection of Preserving Jars.)
	Ash Tray for stove.) Donated.
	1 large Pot Plant.)
Miss Lang, Oatley.	Collection of Sheet Music. Some 1875. Donated.
Mrs. McDermott, Beverly Hills.	Large Floral Patchwork Cotton Quilt. Donated.
Mrs. Sidery, West Kogarah.	1 Loving Cup.)
	1 Commemorative Jug. Silver)
	Wedding of Prince & Princess of Wales, 1863-1888.)
	4 Miniatures.)Donated.
	15 Willow Pattern Pieces.)
	2 Glass Salt Dishes.)
Mrs. McIntosh, Dulwich Hill.	1 Crockery Rolling Pin, Very old. Donated.
Mrs. McClure, Newtown.	1 Potts Iron)
	1 Book. Penny Post 1888.) Donated.

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RESEARCH IS FASCINATING - Even to the Amateur.

- Bromwyn Perkins
Publicity Officer.

The Society visited Botany Cemetery on Saturday 20th September, 1975, for the express purpose of viewing the old headstones moved to Botany from the Devonshire Street Cemetery around 1901, when the Devonshire Street Cemetery was moved to make way for the extension of the railway from Redfern to Central.

Amongst the many interesting headstones viewed, the following aroused much interest:

" George DAVIDSON - Surgeon of Scotland
born 1814 - died 20th October 1839
son of the late James Davidson
'Dandie Dinmont' of Sir Walter Scott."

The inscription '*Dandie Dinmont*' aroused particular interest, linked with the name of Sir Walter Scott, lying there at Botany, so far removed from Scotland. The ignorance of members concerning the Classics became apparent but was rectified as time went on. Most of the writing was remarkably clear considering the age of the headstone. The actual word '*Dandie*' was not easily decipherable. It was carefully felt, read & re-read, & at first thought to be "*Divine*". From this assumption it was thought that George Davidson must have been a medical friend or life-long friend of Sir Walter Scott. In the midst of this conjecture we failed to notice that George Davidson was only twenty-five years of age when he died, & his age alone would have precluded such a possibility, as Sir Walter Scott was born in 1771 & died in 1832. One member, upon reflection, recalled that "*Dandie Dinmont*" is a well-known breed of dog.

The question remained, what was the connection, and why on a headstone belonging to early Sydney Town? Interest was aroused, and the search for information begun.

Dictionaries were consulted and all agreed:

'*Dandie Dinmont*' - species of Scotch terrier, short-legged, long-bodied, rough coated from Scottish borders.
Name of a character in Sir Walter Scott's '*Guy Mannering*' who kept a special breed of terriers.

One dictionary defined '*Dinmont*' as:

border name for 'weather' between first & second shearing.

Still thinking that the phrase '*Dandie Dinmont*' referred to George Davidson, information was sought concerning Sir Walter Scott's writings. '*Guy Mannering*' was written in 1815, when George would only have been one year old, so could hardly fit the character of the Classics.

The question still remained, to whom did this phrase refer?

Further information was obtained from Kogarah Municipal Library.

1. From "*Literature in Perspective - Scott*" - Angus & Jenni Calder - p32 - '*Youth & Marriage*' -

Meanwhile, Scott 'took the gown'. What his life as a young lawyer was like can be glimpsed in '*Redgauntlet*', where Sanders Fairford is Scott's own father; Alan Fairford, the sober hero, is Scott's version of himself; and Darsie Latimer, the romantic hero, is modelled on his friend Clerk. Soon afterwards, Scott paid his first visit to the remote valley of Liddesdale, down by the Cumberland Border. Here he met one of the originals of *Dandie Dinmont* in '*Guy Mannering*', an honest farmer who came out to greet the young advocate surrounded by dogs, and made him very welcome when he saw how Scott got on with them. This was in 1792. For seven successive years thereafter, Scott with a friend, who was Sheriff-substitute of Roxburghshire, visited Liddesdale, exploring every river to its source, and lingering over every ruin. There was no inn in the whole valley, so they put up with the farmers and preachers, and here Scott began to collect the material for his '*Ministrelsy of the Scottish Border*'.

p77 - '*The Waverley Novels*' -

There is another kind of semi-comic character who reminds us of a side of life equally important. *Dandie Dinmont* in '*Guy Mannering*' is an example. He illustrates another meaning of the word gentleman. Bertram recovers his lost heritage - his name, his status and his property. But *Dandie*'s inheritance is the Border country of Liddesdale, his name and status have meaning only through his own character and actions, and his property is useful only in so far as he makes it so. Although Scott placed so much importance on the idea of the well-bred gentleman of property with good, preferably aristocratic blood in his veins, the humbly born, commonsensical, kind, good-humoured *Dandie Dinmont* was also for him a model of what man should be. The combination of natural caniness and natural kindness marks many of Scott's most impressive characters.

2. From "*The Wizard of the North*" - Carola Oman - *The Life of Sir Walter Scott* -

p48 - '*Greenmantle 1790-1797*' -

Within a few days of Scott writing that if his pony did not soon recover he was thinking of going into town, a

new interest which was to enliven his holidays for the next seven years, and indeed determine his profession, presented itself. A racketty young friend, Charles Kerr of Abbotrule, introduced him to his kinsman the Sheriff-Substitute of Roxburghshire. Robert Shortreed 'just your man' had many connections in the unexplored and remote passes of Liddesdale. With this local worthy as his guide, Scott 'explored every rivulet to its source, every ruined peel from foundation to battlement'. The district was without wheeled traffic, inns, public, houses or regular roads. They passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse. On these annual rambles which he described as his raids into Liddesdale, Scott collected at least one ballad for his '*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*'. 'He was makin' himsell a' the time', explained his mentor, 'but he didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed. At first he thought o' little, I daresay, but the queerness and the fun'.

Shortreed believed that an upland shee-farmer, Willie Elliot of Milburnholm, was the original *Dandie Dinmont*, but there was a later candidate, *Jemie Davidson of Hindlee*, who was known as *Dandie* to his dying day. Scott had heard of him, but had never met him when he wrote '*Guy Mannering*'. He had celebrated terriers all called Mustard or Pepper according to their colours, but with no other distinction except 'old', 'young' and 'little'. (3)

3. Reference (3) provided further information:

"*Lockhart 1, 1666-71, Hughes, 85-89.*

Mrs Hughes when staying at Abbotsford head that *Davidson* had at first been highly affronted at finding himself immortalised. He entered on his tax return only two dogs - Mustard and Pepper.

This was proof sufficient. the late *James Davidson*, father of George Davidson, was the *Dandie Dinmont* of Sir Walter Scott!

Sufficient interest was aroused to request a copy of '*Guy Mannering*' from the local library, and for the sum of 20 cents this was obtained from Sutherland, as Kogarah did not possess a copy.

The preface indicates there were many candidates for the title *Dandie Dinmont*, but contains the following interesting information.

"*Guy Mannering - Sir Walter Scott -*
p.x - Preface -

According to Scott in his letter to Daniel Terry on 18th April 1816, it was at a law circuit that he was introduced to one who might well have been *Dandie's* prototype, 'a man whom I never saw in my life before, namely, the proprietor

of all the Pepper and Mustard family - in other words, the genuine *Dandie Dinmont*. *Dandie* is himself modest, and says, 'he b'lives it's only dougs that is in the buik, and no himsel'... In truth, I knew nothing of the man except his odd humour of having only two names for twenty dogs ... *Jamie Davidson* of Hyndlea certainly looks *Dandie Dinmont* remarkably well. He is much flattered with the compliment, and goes uniformly by the name among his comrades, but has never read the book. Ailie used to read it to him, but it set him to sleep."

Questions still remained to be answered. Was James Davidson ever in Sydney? Why was that particular inscription on his son's headstone, so far from Scotland?

A sad but interesting story unfolded as further research was undertaken at the Mitchell Library.

There were references to a James Davidson, in the Australian Index, but none appeared to fit the dates known. One reference only was found to George Davidson.

"State of the Affairs of the late G Davidson, 1840 (Stenhouse & Hardy's Miscellaneous Legal Papers, p 27) A 102 -

1839.

Oct. 15	To proceeds pounds 1360 Bills paid into Com.Bank.Co.	- 1350.0.0.	
" "	" cash paid himself	- <u>20.4.0.</u>	- 1370. 4. 0
" 19	" paid bill for washing at sea & since he came to Sydney	-	18. 9
" "	" paid Lawer for drawing his will	-	4. 0. 0
" 24	" Wintrup & Oliver's Acct. for Board & Lodging & funeral charges	-	6.16. 3
" "	" Dr Welch for medical attendance - 3.3.0		
" "	" Dr Wallace " " " - <u>4.4.0</u>	-	7. 7. 0
" "	" Crape & Gloves for the funeral	-	2.13. 1
" "	" woman for attending him on his death bed	-	15. 0
" "	" inserting his death in newspaper	-	3. 0
" "	" letter paper	-	2. 6
" 25	" Undertaker's Account for Coffin & Hearse	-	8. 0. 0
" "	" Lawer's a/c for putting the Will through the proper legal formalities & Making copies of the same	-	21.19. 2
" "	" Funds left in the hands of Mr Blacket to pay for a tombstone by agreement	-	7.10. 0
" "	" Funds retained by Mr Davidson to pay Walter Davidson for money lent to Geo. in & since we left London - 3. 7.11		
" "	" Geo. Davidson's share of the expenses of Wm. Walker in Sydney- <u>1.11. 6</u>	-	4.19. 5
" 28	" Mark Davidson for his Expenses as Acting Executor & for his exertions in saving to Mrs Davidson so much of her son's property	-	<u>50. 0. 0</u>
	Carry forward	-	1485. 8. 2

This was the only legal paper to be seen concerning the late George Davidson. No typewriter can portray the elegance of the copper plate handwriting of the clerks of that day. But the typist can duplicate spelling errors!

From this one entry, by cross reference, something of his family, time of arrival in the country and other interesting facets of early Sydney life have been traced.

The Index to the Sydney Herald contained a reference to his death. This led to the request to read the 1839 Sydney Herald, in the Newspaper Room of the General Reference Library.

"Sydney Herald - 25th October 1839 -

Death - On the 20th October 1839, at The Sir Walter Scott Inn, Bathurst St, Sydney, George Davidson Esq., Surgeon, aged 25 years, son of Mr James Davidson, formerly of Hindlee, Roxburghshire of Scotland."

Turning back a few pages, prompted by the entry 'bill for washing at sea & since he came to Sydney', which suggested a recent arrival, the exact date was found.

"Sydney Herald - Monday 30th September 1839 -

Shipping Intelligence - Arrivals. From London same day (refers to Friday 27.9.1839) having left Plymouth the 13th June, the barque 'Letitia' 375 tons, Captain Blake with merchandise. Passengers - cabin - Mr & Mrs Meredith, Mrs Saddler, Mr & Mrs Bellin & child, Mr Samuel Bowtrie, Mr Thomas Rudd, Mr John Daives, Mr George Schultze, Mr George Hodgkinson, Mr August Robinson, Mr Robert Welch - Surgeon, Miss Austin, Messrs Mark, Walter, Peter and George Davidson, Mr John Pepperill, Mr Henry Penson, Mr William Walker, Mr Augustus DeLauret."

George Davidson had arrived in Sydney but three weeks earlier in the company of his three brothers, after a journey from London lasting three months. Of the many inns and lodging houses in Sydney at the time, it was to the Sir Walter Scott Inn, they came. Homeland ties are strong!

Application was made to the Registrar General's Office, for a copy of the death certificate and the required fee of \$3.00 paid. The copy received within the week, did not reveal the cause of death, as the cause was not necessarily recorded at that time. The document received gives details of the burial.

"Application 115018/75 CB -

Presbyterian BURIALS in the Parish of St. Andrews, Sydney, County of Cumberland, New South Wales, in the year 1839 -

No	1332 Vol:102
Name	George DAVIDSON
Abode	Sydney
When Died	-
When Buried	21st October, 1839
Age	25 years
Quality or Profession	Surgeon
(if bond, name of ship).	'Letitia' 1839
By whom the Ceremony was performed	Rev J McGarvie (Roxburgh Shire)"

Did this mean that George Davidson worked his passage as the ship's doctor? But listed in the passenger list of arrivals was Mr Robert Welch - Surgeon, whose name appears on the legal paper of accounts for payment. This is conjecture, and no proof has been found, other than that George Davidson was a passenger on board 'Letitia'.

Application was then made to the Probate Division of the Supreme Cour of New South Wales, where for 50 cents the copy of George Davidson's will was seen and copied.

"p.1086 (1) Date of death: 20th October 1839 - George DAVIDSON -

George Davidson - This is the last will & testament of me George Davidson of Scotland - Surgeon lately arrived in the Colony of New South Wales in the Ship 'Letitia'. I give devise and bequeath all my real & personal Estate whatsoever and wheresoever unto my friend James Blackett of Sydney, Miller and Mark Davidson of Sydney, Settler, to hold the same unto the said James Blackett and Mark Davidson their heirs & executors - administrators & afsigns according to the nature there of respectively Upon the trusts hereinafter - mentioned that is to say Upon trust as soon as conveniently may be after my decease to convert all my said property into money and by and out of the proceeds of the same in the first place to pay all my just debts funeral & testamentary expenses & upon further trust to pay the residue of such money unto my Dear Mother Janet Davidson of Edinborough in Scotland Widow for her own absolute use & benefit. And I hereby nominate & - appoint the said James Blackett & Mark Davidson Executors of this my Will. In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this nineteenth day of October in the year of our Lord, One thousand eight hundred and thirty nine.

- George Davidson

Signed Sealed published and declared by the said George Davidson the testator as and to be his last Will & Testament in the presence of us who in his presence of each other have hereunto - subscribed our names as Witnesses.

- Adolphus W^m Young
Soler Sydney
- Tho^s Winterup
- W. Oliver.

October 26th 1839 - Probate granted to James Blackett & Mark Davidson the Executors dated the 12th day of November 1839.

Goods etc., Sworn not to exceed the value of one thousand four hundred pounds.

- Seal of the Supreme Court-Probate Jurisdiction."

The Directories of the Mitchell Library were then checked for information concerning the names mentioned.

"The N. S.W. & Port Phillip Directory - 1839 -

Winterup Thomas - Sir Walter Scott, Bathurst & Sussex Street, Sydney
Wallace Dr, M.D. Kent & Druitt Sts., Sydney
Young Adolphus, J.P. Elizabeth St. North, Sydney.
MacGarvie Rev. John, A.M. St. Andrew's Church, Sydney."

No reference is made of James Blackett, William Walker or W Oliver. James, we know from the Will to be a 'friend and Miller of Sydney'. William Walker, a fellow passenger on the 'Letitia', but no reference has been found to W Oliver.

Thomas Winterup proved to be the licensee of the Sir Walter Scott Inn, as found in the Australian of 2nd May, 1839, when his license was granted.

It would appear that the family had left Scotland following the death of the father, but this was not necessarily so. Further reading of the classic "*Guy Mannering*" revealed that James Davidson died -

on the first Sabbath of the year (1820), an apoplectic stroke deprived him in an instant of all sensation, but happily his brother was at his bedside for he had detained him from the meeting house that day to be near him, although he felt himself not much worse than usual....

This piece of information was gleaned from footnotes to chpt 23, which also give more explicit details of the actual location of the property -

Mr Davidson resided at Hindlee a wild farm, on the very edge of Teviotdale mountains, and bordering close on Liddesdale,

where the rivers and brooks divide as they take their course to the Eastern and Western seas.

George Davidson would have been but a child of six years of age when his father died. At some time the family must have moved to Edinburgh, where mother was living when they left for N.S.W. The four sons had come to Sydney Town, but tragedy struck with the early death of George, apparently the youngest of the four. The remaining brothers, motivated by that well known fierce Scottish pride, left a lasting reminder of their family and Homeland in the inscription ' "*Dandie Dinmont*" of *Sir Walter Scott*', still to be seen in the one hundred and thirty six year old tombstone now located at Botany Cemetery.

This article has been written to show that possessing a Reader's Ticket to the Special Collections of the Library of N.S.W., an enquiring mind, plenty of patience and time, a little money, reasonable eyesight and leg muscles, research can be carried out and can prove to be fascinating, even to the amateur.

Acknowledgments:

1. Literature in Perspective - *Scott* - Angus & Jenni Calder -
First published 1969 - Evans Brothers Limited.
2. The life of Sir Walter Scott - *The Wizard of the North* -
Carola Oman - first printed 1973 - Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.
3. *Guy Mannering* - Sir Walter Scott - First published in this edition 1906 -
J.M.Dent & Sons Ltd., Everyman's Library.

Gratitude is expressed to fellow members of the Society for guidance in seeking information, for correction of script and encouragement to write the article.

A copy of this article has been requested by the Botany Cemetery Trust, who confirmed the date of removal of the headstone, for inclusion in the Memorial Park literature they are collecting concerning the preservation of these headstones and any research done in connection therewith.