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ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



PRICE 5 c .

# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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6/9 Austral Street,

October, 1987

Dear Friend and Member,

The October Meeting will be held as follows:

Date Friday, 16th October, 1987 at 8.00 p.m.

Place Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale

Business General

Syllabus Item

"Carss Park" Our President, Arthur Ellis, will be Guest Speaker on this occasion. Arthur is thoroughly conversant with the history of Carss Park, which he has researched in depth, reading every conceivable document from all available sources. We should all learn the factual history of this beautiful Park, and lovely old home known as "Carss Park and Carss Cottage"

Supper Roster CAPTAIN - MRS KELL and helper, Mrs Longhurst

## LADIES PLEASE BRING A PLATE

Supper time is a most enjoyable meeting time and allows you to talk with our Speaker and each other.

Mr. A. Ellis,  
President and Research  
Officer

587 1159

Mrs E. Wright,  
Treasurer  
Temporary Only  
599 4884

Mrs J. Price,  
Minute Secretary

587 7407

Miss D. Row,  
Asst. Treasurer

Mrs B. Perkins,  
Secretary and  
Publicity Officer

587 9164

Mrs E. Eardley,  
Bulletin Editor

59 8078

People seem unaware that their opinion of the world is also a confession of character.

Ralph Walds Emerson

Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.

Thomas Jefferson

A cheerio to our friends who are not so well. Our best wishes to all for a speedy recovery.

### SPECIAL NOTICE

#### ALL BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE

The St. George Historical Society is pleased to announce that the following books, Nos. 1-7 written and illustrated by the late Gifford H. Eardley for the Society, have been reprinted and are now available. Book Nos. 8, 9 and 10 have been compiled by Mrs Bronwyn Perkins.

- |       |   |                |
|-------|---|----------------|
| No.1  | "The Wolli Creek Valley"                              | Book Nos. 1-8  |
| No.2  | "Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"                       | \$2.50 each    |
|       |   | plus postage   |
| No.3  | "Saywells Tramway - Rockdale to Lady Robinsons Beach" |                |
| No.4  | "Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway"                         |                |
| No.5  | "Our Heritage in Stone"                               |                |
| No.6  | "All Stations to Como"                                |                |
| No.7  | "Tempe and the Black Creek Valley"                    |                |
| No.8  | "Early Churches of the St. George District"           |                |
| No.9  | "Early Settlers of the St. George District Volume 1"  | Book Nos. 9-10 |
|       |   | \$4.00 each    |
|       |   | plus postage   |
| No.10 | "Early Settlers of the St. George District Volume 2"  |                |

#### ALL BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE AT OUR MEETING, ALSO MEMBERS BADGES

For your copy of the above books, please contact one of the following:

- |                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Miss B. Otton  | 59 4259 (after 8 p.m.) |
| Mrs E. Eardley | 59 8078                |
| Mr. A. Ellis   | 587 1159               |

#### NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS ARE WELCOME

Have you volunteered for the Supper Roster? More help is needed!!!



2NBC-FM 90.1 - ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
1987 - Tuesday evenings - 6.30p.m. - 6.45p.m.

- Tape 218 - 11th August - Sesquicentenary of Wm. Grant Broughton. - C. Wilding
- Tape 219 - 18th August - Loftus Junction & Tarzans Grip. - H. Loring
- Tape 220 - 25th August - Wm. Grant Broughton. - C. Wilding
- Tape 221 - 1st September - Historical 1sts Railway etc. - H. Loring
- Tape 222 - 8th September - First Wool Clippers Bridge etc. - C. Turner
- Tape 223 - 15th September - 1st Gas Supply, Graving Dock, Naval Base - C. Turner
- Tape 224 - 22nd September - 1st Empire Games Aust, Air Force etc. - D. Sinclair
- Tape 225 - 29th September - 1st Aust. Motor Industry Jacaranda Festival etc. - D. Sinclair
- Tape 226 - 6th October - 1st Settlement Victoria South Aust & West Aust. - C. Turner
- Tape 227 - 13th October - 1st. Settlement Tasmania Overland Cape York & 1st to the Centre. - C. Turner
- Tape 228 - 20th October - 1st. N.T. Port, Settlement Q'ld, 1st Lighthouse etc. - D. Sinclair
- Tape 229 - 27th October - 1st University, Public School & Pub. Library. - D. Sinclair

NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS ARE WELCOME

Have you volunteered for the Supper Roster? More help is needed!!!

# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

SOCIETY  
YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE 1987

## INCOME

MEMBERS' Subscriptions  
Members' Donations  
Sale Society Books  
Sale Society Badges  
Bus Trips  
Raffles  
Tea Money Lydham Hall  
Refund R.A.H.S. Dinner  
Holiday Fund  
Bank Interest

917.00  
64.15  
719.90  
6.00  
214.00  
121.80  
17.50  
22.00  
312.77  
46.50

2441.62

Balance in bank 30/6/86

1420.29

\$3861.91

## EXPENDITURE

Mrs. Eardley Postage  
Mrs. Eardley Petty Cash  
Mrs. Hamey Petty Cash  
Mrs. Wright Petty Cash  
Mrs. Perkins Ribbons, Tapes etc.  
Repayment Members' Loan  
Pink Panther Reprint Book No. 2  
Mrs. Hamey Goat Island Tour  
Mrs. Hamey Christmas Cheer  
R.A.H.S. Conference & Dinner  
R.A.H.S. Annual Subscription  
National Trust Subscription  
Australia Post  
Crossways Travel Bus Tour Heritage Week  
Cheque Book  
F.T.D. \$5.60 F.I.D. 78c

331.98  
40.00  
70.00  
45.00  
224.68  
900.00  
427.00  
30.00  
30.00  
144.00  
40.00  
38.00  
40.00  
90.00  
5.00  
6.38

\$2462.04

Balance in Bank 30/6/87

1399.91

\$3861.91

I certify that I have examined the books of account  
vouchers, cheque butts and bank statements presented  
by Mrs. E. Wright as treasurer of the above society  
and in my opinion this represents a true statement  
of its financial affairs as at 30th June, 1987.

*Therese Dunmore*  
.....

Auditor 11/7/87



LYDHAM HALL FUND RAISING COMMITTEE  
FOR YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE 1987  
INCOME

Lydham Hall Admittances	278.45	
Cake Sales	3.30	
Raffles	146.60	
Donations	54.05	
St. George Historical Society Books sold	142.00	
Lydham Hall Teaspoons & Cake Forks	110.00	
Bank interest	31.98	
Cash in bank 30/6/86	<u>823.39</u>	
	\$1589.77	
Capital investment in St. George Building Society A/c No. 11 973 702 at 30/6/86	1174.48	
Interest	84.16	
Less F.I.D.	<u>.02</u>	
	\$1258.62	

Value of 50 Teaspoons and 42 Cake Forks  
on hand at 30/6/86 each \$250.00

LYDHAM HALL FUND RAISING COMMITTEE  
FOR YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE 1987  
EXPENDITURE

Perfection Plate	108.83
Petty Cash	40.00
R.W.Rathbone for photo frame	27.60
St. George Historical Society Books	125.90
Petty Cash	23.00
St. George Historical Society Books	60.20
F.D.I. & F.I.D.	1.03
Cash in bank	<u>1203.21</u>
	\$1589.77

I certify that I have examined the books of account, vouchers, cheque books, bank statements and building society passbook presented by Miss B. Otton as treasurer of the above committee and in my opinion this represents a true statement of its financial affairs as at 30th June, 1987.

*A. H. Dunsmore*  
Auditor 11/7/87

EXCERPTS FROM .... CURRENCY LASS ...

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 P.O. Box 320 Sutherland 2232  
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Author: Margaret Reeson.

Author's Note:

Writing to her brother shortly before her wedding day, 19 year old Mary Hassall spoke of her feelings. She was in love and looked forward to her marriage with the Rev. Walter Lawry, but she had no way of knowing what their life together might mean.

She wrote: "I tremble on the brink as I am just about to take a step which will either be my happiness or greatest grief and misery thro' life.... I feel the deepest unworthiness of the station I am soon to fill but hope the Lord will give me grace to do his will in all things and fit me exactly for an helpmate in all things to my dear love, not being an hindrance to his usefulness in the smallest matter, but a spur to it, and soother of his moments of solitude and may we bear each other's burdens and take up our cross daily following Christ in all things. I really do love him more than any other I know or did know or wish to be acquainted with....."  
 - Parramatta July 24, 1819.

Mary Hassall, later Mrs Mary Lawry, was a girl of early Australia - a 'currency lass' - born in the colony in 1799. This account of her life is a piecing together of the patchwork of diaries, letters, newspaper articles and reports of her day.

Mary wrote at least 19 letters to her brother, Thomas, between 1816 and 1825 and Thomas kept them all. The original letters, now yellowed but still bearing the imprint of Mary's handwriting - sometimes sprawling and emotional - sometimes tidy and considered - with original attempts at spelling - can be read in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. One letter carries the shadow of a long, straight twist of hair, which she sent to Thomas and which must have lain undisturbed for generations.

As well as Mary's own letters, her husband Walter kept a detailed diary during his ministry in N.S.W. and Tonga, 1818-1825, and wrote long letters to his parents - as well as many letters to the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Committee in London. In later years he published 2 accounts of visits to Tonga in 1847 and 1850. In these he reflected on the past, adding contemporary descriptions of various places and people he saw.

The letters of Mary Lawry's father, Roland Hassall, as well as her 4 brothers, are represented in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, in collections of family letters and correspondence to London Missionary Society personnel in London and Tahiti. Letters and papers of such contemporaries as Samuel Leigh, John Williams, William Carvosso, Ralph Mansfield, Samuel Marsden, Lachlan Macquarie and others have also been used.

When in this book, Mary says, "In my letter to Thomas today I wrote..."; "Walter wrote in his diary..."; or some



equivalent phrase, the dates and the quotations from the original letters are authentic, including Mary's own spelling. (Punctuation has been added for ease of reading.) When Mary comments, - "Father says.." or "Walter told me".. their quoted remarks are based on their own writings. Dates are given at the beginning of sections in the book - they link directly with dates on which Mary wrote her letters or with other (dated) primary sources.

For any reader who is interested in detailed references a fully referenced version of this manuscript is available at St. Mark's Library, Canberra and the Womens' Archives, Australian Nation University, Canberra.

### Prologue:

St.Austell, Cornwall: Christmas Day 1825.

Today they brought my son to see me. I think it was to say goodbye. He came to me with snowflakes still clinging to his little jacket, his eyes bright and puzzled and his hands so cold. I held his hands to warm them as he told me about his ride through the snow erched on the horse in front of his father. How can I bear to be separated from my son and his little sisters? How can I part from my husband, my other self? I'm not really afraid of dying, I don't think, but it is so desperately hard to let them go.

Some of the women of the family have been sitting with me. They thought that I was asleep. "poor little thing," they said. 'So sad. She is so young - and Mary must have had such a hard life, too. Imagine growing up in a penal colony! What a poisonous atmosphere that must have been. And then all those naked savages ... The poor girl has been deprived of so much, has made so many sacrifices. It seems such a waste.'

No, no. They don't understand. They would never understand even if I had the strength to tell them. Here in their cold, ancient land they don't understand the warmth and brightness, the fascination of the new, the challenge of taking steps of faith into a strange society, or the great love I have known.

It is too late to explain to them now. But as I lie here, waiting, I can remember....

Parramatta N.S.W: December 12, 1816.

I really didn't want to go to the schoolhouse this evening. If I were not such an unconvincing liar, I could have complained of a headache or of some vague feeling of faintness, but it would not have worked. Mother is no fool and knows that I have rarely been ill in my life. I certainly don't look unhealthy today - not on my 17th birthday..... Our entire family - Father, Mother, 4 boys and 4 girls - will always be there in the schoolroom on Wednesday nights, whether we like it or not.....The classroom filled up slowly, not really crowded but what else could you expect at a midweek Methodist meeting in a village like Parramatta? It is different on Sunday mornings at St John's Church when the Rev. Samuel Marsden is preaching and the building is nearly full.



That is the place where respectable and wealthy members of the community come to show how virtuous they are, decked out in military uniforms and smart clothes from London and Paris. Ladies in their sprigged silk and frilly parasols sit in their retred pews well away from the lines of convicts, marched to their places under the guard of rows of soldiers. At least on Wednesday evenings at the Methodist services no one is there because he might be flogged is he is not.....

Our family, the Hassalls, came to N.S.W. free, so we mostly mix with free people...Everyone knows my father, Mr Rowland Hassall..... I was a student in this same classroom, as well as working with our governess, Mrs Rutter...I worked over my slate at those same desks, trying to perfect an elegant, looping style but spoiling it when faced with real paper. Somehow the magpie quill always needed mending and the treacherous inkpowder often produced a horrible defacing blot in the middle of my work.

17 uears ago I was born here in Parramatta and I have never lived anywhere else. Mother says that the family had only been here in N.S.W. for a year before I was born - my 3 older brothers were all born before they came. Some newcomers to this colony seem to think that it must be rather awful living here in a penal colony, but I can't imagine anything else. Of course, I'm glad that I'm not a convict - I know too many convict girls to have any delusions about the often homeless and unprotected life they ahve to live - but it doesn't seem so very strange to see convict work gangs on the roads and farms. And what do people do for servants in the house if they don't have convict women?.....

Parramatta, N.S.W: January 1817.

The old journal was found again today.... I went to the chest, which I rarely open, and as I looked through the papers for the recipe, I came across the journal....When I was a little girl, I was helping Mother pack some things in her sea-chest and, seeing the book, had noticed some blank pages at the end. We were always short of paper, so fragments of paper for writing and drawing were in demand. So I asked 'May I have this old paper for drawing pictures? May I? Do you need this old book any more?'

Mother had been quite shocked. 'Certainly not! That is my journal' investing the word with great importance, though I didn't understand it. 'That is what I wrote long ago when Father and I travelled from England to Tahit to be missionaries, when Thomas was only 2 and Samuel was a new baby.. No, your weren't born yet.'

I was only a child and, although I had heard them talk of living in Tahiti years before, it was beyond my imagination. Tome, even the 15 mile drive to Sydney was a long way and the journey to Father's new grazing land grant 25 miles away at the Cowspastures almost the ends of the earth....

(Mary's parents had left England on loth August 1796, on the "Duff", in convoy with 57 transports and Portugese traders, to avoid enemy French ships, then sailed on alone. They anchored off Tahiti on 5th March 1797. Circumstances caused their leaving Tahiti and on board the 'Nautilus' they limped into Port Jackson, 14th May 1798, with the new baby Jonathan.)



Parramatta, N.S.W. March 1817.

Whatever will our Sunday School do without Thomas to lead it? It is hard to believe that my beloved brother Thomas, is going away, all the way to England to study at Wales, at Lampeter College for the Anglican ministry. He'll be away for years... When I was 13 Thomas invited some boys and girls into our home one Sunday and began the very first Sunday School in the colony.....

Parramatta N.S.W. September 1817.

The wattles have been in glorious golden bloom again.... Amid great commotion and hurrying up and down the hill with cartloads of household goods, the Marsden family have moved into their grant two-storey mansion high up on the hill, looking north over parramatta.... Now the Marsdens have moved they have left their old house to the young Maori men who have been living with them at what Mr Marsden rather grandly calls the Seminary. Rev. Samuel Marsden has been interested in the Maoris for as long as I can remember. As long ago as 1804, he had dreamed of beginning a new missionary work in New Zealand... The first time Mr Marsden went to New Zealand himself, in 1814, he took his party of missionaries - the Kendalls, Halls, and Kings - and several work people and settled them all at Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands. I have often heard him tell the story of the very first Christian service in New Zealand on Christmas Day 1814... Anne and Elizabeth Marsden have been known to sigh with resignation when he launches yet again into the tale of that day, which they now know by heart!

Ever since then, the Marsdens have had a few Maoris as well as a few aboriginal children living at their house. A couple of years ago Mr Marsden started his Seminary for young New Zealanders, so that the sons of chiefs could come here for education. This year there are 11 young men living just down the road in George Street. They are learning some reading, writing and English language, but mainly what Mr Marsden calls the "civilising arts", such as spinning, ropemaking, canvas work and agriculture. My brothers Samuel, Jonathan and James often spend time with them, talking about their lives in New Zealand and their strange customs.....

Parramatta, N.S.W. January 1, 1818.

It is New Year's Day and I have spent the day in the heat and dust and flies of the market here in Parramatta at the annual Aboriginal Gathering. The Governor and Mrs Macquarie had invited a great many tribespeople to a meeting here today, and, of course, quite a lot of Parramatta residents came along to look. Governor Macquarie had provided tables loaded with roast beef and potatoes, fish and a big cask of grog.....

Mr Marsden doesn't have much sympathy for aboriginal tribespeople. He once had a foster-son, a foundling called Tristan, living with his family for years, hoping to turn him into a civilised settler. But the lad disappointed him very deeply by getting into bad company, often getting drunk, stealing from Mr Marsden and finally running away from the family while they were in Rio on their way back to England for a holiday. In the end, Tristan was brought back to Australia and he returned to a wild state in the bush.....



Parramatta, N.S.W. May 4, 1818.

Yesterday, on our way home from Sydney, brother James whipped up the horse and sent our chaise spinning down the hill away from the town, on through the bush on the road home to Parramatta. James enjoys driving, as I suppose any 16 year old boy might do, and I clung to my seat as we bounced along...

Earlier this week, Mother asked me to take her place at a birthday celebration for Mrs Smith's little Eliza. Because Mother couldn't go, she sent me with James to Sydney. We stayed on in Sydney for a few days, and on the day after the birthday, I was invited to dinner at Mr and Mrs Eager's house. Mr Eager came as a convict, a very young Irish attorney convicted of perjury. He has been free for many years now and has become a prosperous businessman.....When I arrived at the Eager's place and walked into their parlour, I was startled to see a young man who was a complete stranger. Certainly I don't know everyone in Sydney, but I had thought that I knew everyone who might be expected to dine at Mr and Mrs Eager's table.

Perhaps my surprise showed on my face, for Mrs Eager said, "hadn't you heard, Miss Hassall? The ship 'Lady Castlereagh' arrived yesterday. Let me introduce you to the Rev. Walter Lawry, our new Methodist Minister. This is Miss Hassall'.

The young man took my hand and smiled in such a friendly way and together we went to the table. Through the meal he asked many questions about the colony and told us a little about himself. He is from Cornwall and has been a Methodist minister in training for 2 years. I think he may be about the same age as our Thomas, about 25.

He spoke of the voyage out:..."I became very interested in astronomy as we moved from the northern to the southern hemisphere and learned a lot about the stars in the southern skies. Of course, I read a lot. I had brought about 60 books with me for my library here in the colony, but I have already read 30 of them: theology, history, geography, sermons, philosophy and so on. And after I had been feeling most miserably seasick, I used my time poring over my atlas, trying to work out a way I could return to England as far as possible on dry land! It is not impossible either - one could sail to India and go overland from there."

30 big books in 4 months, I thought. Good heavens! I decided to keep very quiet or he would think me a very ignorant person.

Mr Lawry explained more about the ship: "It was a convict ship and 300 people were on board as convicts. I asked permission to preach, but it was very difficult and strange. They lined all the convicts up for a service between decks, but I found it very hard to preach freely with soldiers armed with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets standing at each elbow! Right behind me was a loaded cannon, hidden behind a screen, aimed into the congregation."

Bouncing along in the chaise today, I told myself not to be so silly. It is ridiculous to like someone so much on first meeting. When Mr Leigh gets back from his country trip in a



few days, he will be so pleased. He will be so thankful to have a colleague after so many years.

Parramatta, N.S.W. May 8, 1818.

Mr Leigh arrived at our house this afternoon looking a new man. As Mother wasn't home, I answered the door and found a beaming Mr Leigh on the doorstep with Mr Lawry beside him. "Allow me to introduce my new colleague, the Rev. Walter Lawry, just arrived a week ago," Mr Leigh said.

"Miss Hassall and I have already met", Mr Lawry responded and greeted me in a most charming way. Of course, I invited them in to come and have tea with us, but was surprised at the agitated way I found myself reacting to their presence. Not, of course, that they would have noticed anything strange, but suddenly it seemed very important for the silver to be polished, the tea delicious and the cakes light.....

Mr Leigh preaches a good sermon, but this new young man said things that struck right at my heart in a way that was quite disturbing. I must think about it.....

Parramatta N.S.W. May 18, 1818.

Today I have been writing a long letter to Thomas in Wales. Wales seems so very far away. Many of our friends have lived in England, or have visited there, but I have never done that. Mother is so proud of the great oak trees in our garden, the biggest in the colony now changing colour as the weather cools, but people say that there are whole forests of oaks in England and trees and flowers that I have never seen....

A month ago we had letters from Thomas. Such excitement! He has been gone over a year, but the letters were written from Batavia, while he was still on the journey - and a slow and miserable journey it sounded too. By now he must surely be safely at his studies in Wales....

I have been writing to tell him about everything at home; who has had babies, who is getting married, who has died, our family health - and about Father travelling with Jonathan and James to inspect his recent land grant on the new road over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst. It would have been good if Thomas could have seen us on our special Sunday School Day. Nearly all the 15 teachers and 117 children met at St. John's Church. The children said the chapters they have been learning for Mr Marsden and were given a book or a ticket for their efforts.... Then we all marched in pairs in a lovely long procession behind our flag and the big banner through the streets of Parramatta to our house in George Street. They were all given new books and we all sang together, followed by eating their buns and drinking punch. All the teachers came into the house and drank tea with us...But we really miss Thomas.

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To be continued in due course.