

GEORGE FREDERICK DIXON

1821 ~ 1907



George Frederick Dixon was born on Monday, 29 January 1821 in Sheffield, England. He was the son of Elizabeth Dymond and George Alexander Dixon.

George's family were of English gentry, the "well-born" of the upper social class. He was baptised on 9 September 1829, at the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in Sheffield. George's younger brother, Joseph Kirkton Dixon, was baptised on the same day, with the joint christening being performed by Reverend W. Harris.

At the time, Sheffield was a manufacturing town in the district of West Riding of Yorkshire. It was picturesquely situated in an amphitheatre of wooded hills, traversed by the river Don. The town was well-known for its plated and metal goods, with refineries and smoke stacks dotting the townscape.

The Dixon's themselves were synonymous with the silver industry, most notably the well-known silverware manufacturer *James Dixon & Sons*, of which George was distantly related.

George's own father was a gold and silver refiner, while his grandfather, Mark Dixon, and uncle, Joseph Hault Dixon, were silver and plated wire drawers. The trio ran a business in the Wicker, close to the town's center.

When George was 9 years old, his father, George Alexander Dixon, died at their home in Pittsmoor on 18 June 1830, at the age of 55.

As a young man George served an apprenticeship in wool sorting, with a desire of ultimately becoming a woollen manufacturer. In pursuit of this occupation George paid a premium of £160 and worked for seven years without remuneration.

Unfortunately, at the end of George's apprenticeship he found that conditions had changed and that for him to start out on his own account he would require a capital of at least £10,000. Unable to front such a large sum of money, George decided to try his luck in Australia.



The manufacturing town of Sheffield.



Sheffield Cathedral where George and his brother were baptised.



'Sheffield' drawing by J. Turner, engraved by J. Walker.

George booked himself first-class passage aboard the 441 tonne barque, *Lasca*. The vessel was a “fine, first class, fast sailing ship” commanded by Captain Hugh Mackie and owned by the merchant company *Rowand, M’Nab & Co.*

The *Lasca* departed London on 4 June 1841. On 15 July 1841, it set outward from Gravesend. The *Lasca* made a stop at Cork, Ireland where the ship was laid on with 147 emigrants before setting sail again on 28 July 1841.

One of George’s fellow passengers was the Irishman John Gillespie, who like George was to become one of Canberra’s pioneers and whose great-grandson, Lyall Gillespie, was to write extensively on the early history of the area. This ship also carried two other Canberra families, the Shumacks and the Currans.

The voyage took a total of 107 days with the *Lasca* arriving in Sydney on 11 November 1841. The passengers all arrived in good health, with only one death occurring on the voyage.

On his arrival in Sydney, George was engaged as a wool buyer and classer for Messrs. Robert Campbell Senior of *Campbell & Co.*. This was the start of a long association with the Campbell family which would carry through to Canberra.

As well as the Campbells, George also bought wool for a great number of other merchants. Among them were Messrs. Gilchrist, Alexander, Havilah (Mudgee) and Chisolm (Morpeth district).

Most of the buyers at the time were employed by firms that had begun in the colony, but whose principals had retired from active work and returned home to England. George’s reputation in his profession became so well known that any bale of wool stamped with his name obtained top price.

At the time, all of the wool grown by the smaller settlers was sent to Sydney, where it was then shipped to London for sale. George would spend a great deal of time riding about the State securing the wool.

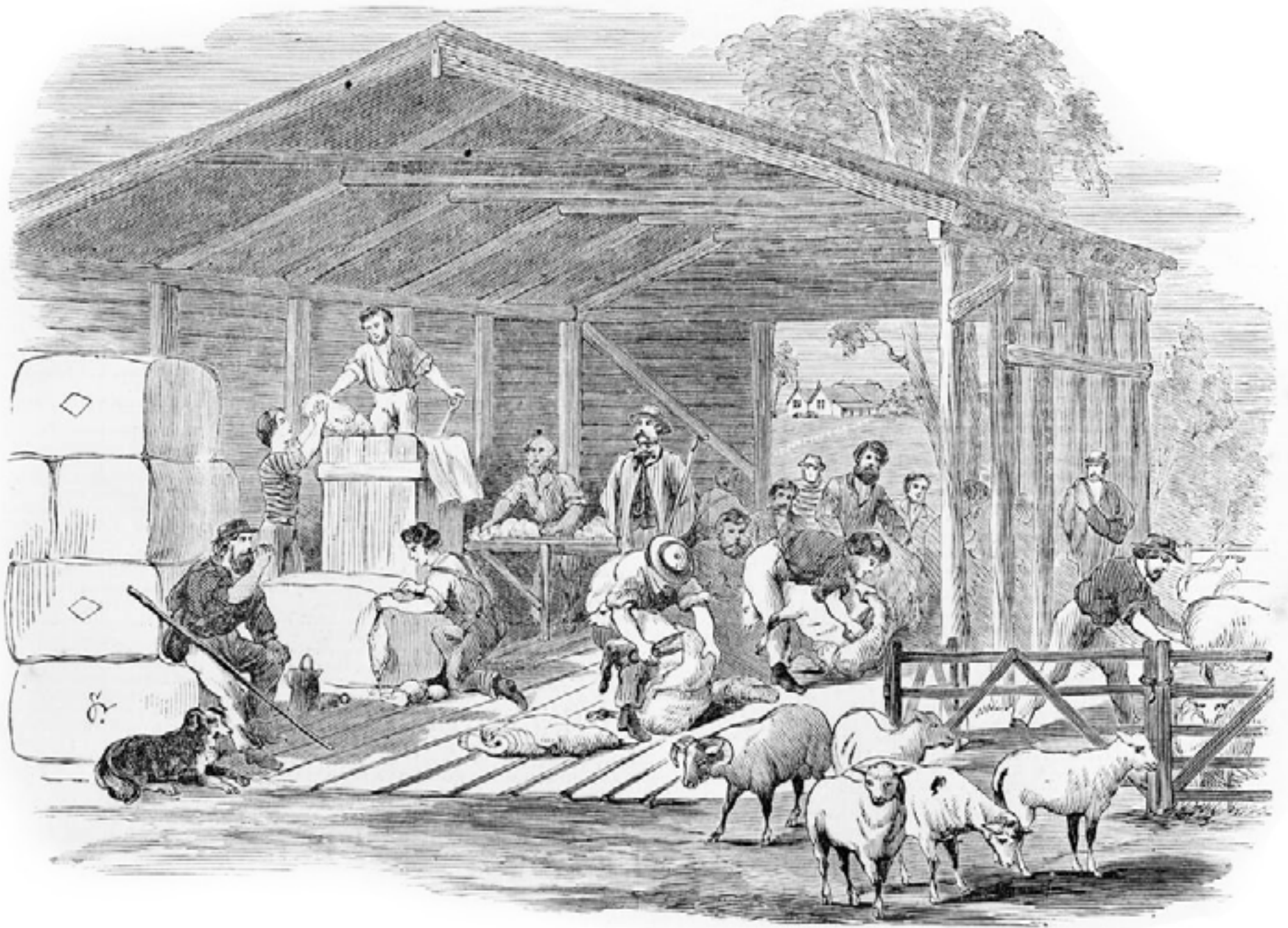


A view of *Campbell & Co.* mercantile house, Sydney.

This changed in 1843, when Thomas Sutcliffe Mort, founder of *Mort & Co.* held the first successful wool auction in Sydney. Mort began holding regular sales from a building in Pitt Street before later moving to his own wool stores in Circular Quay.

During one such sale, George had arrived a little late. As he got near, he heard his name mentioned, and when he went in Mr. Mort said, “Are these your returns I see in the *Herald* today?!” to which George answered “Yes.” and Mort replied, “Well, they might have paid the other half-penny, and made it an even half-crown.” At that time, every ship that left England used to bring a mail. The mail had just come in, and George’s returns of 2s 51d for washed fleece had been published in that morning’s paper.

In an interview given to *The Sydney Wool & Stock Journal*, George declares having held a great opinion of Mr. Mort, who was popular with all sections of the community.



An Australian shearing and wool-baling shed.

In his early days in the colony, George went into business with Richard Heritage and together they started the firm *Dixon & Heritage, woolclassers, packers and et cetera*. Due to an efflux in time the firm was eventually dissolved in November 1849.

On 5 May 1845, George married Sarah Alice Purnell at Saint Andrew's Scots Church in Sydney. The marriage was officiated by Reverend John McGarvie and was witnessed by Henry Graham and Matilda Charlton. George was 24 years of age and Sarah was 18.

On 15 April 1846, the matriarch of the Campbell family, Robert Campbell Senior, died at the age of 77. *Campbell & Co.* passed to Robert's sons John, Robert Junior, Charles and George who continued to grow the company in the vision of their father.

On 23 May 1846, one year after George and Sarah's wedding, their first child, Ann Dixon, was born in Sydney. The child was named after George's older sister, Anne Dixon of Sheffield.

Sometime in the same year, George established a wool-wash and scouring establishment at Willoughby Falls. A special water run was constructed in the creek and men were employed to spout wash the greasy wool to make it marketable for sale. One man known to have been employed by George was William Simpson. George named his homestead *Dixon's Folly* after Folly Point, located in Willoughby Bay.

In 1847, the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* described Willoughby Falls as follows "the trees are all cut down, the rocks excavated, the water drained off, a ridiculous pipe letting it down, when there is any, into tubs, a fence running across, and a house built at the very point of beauty, and the whole beautiful face of nature scarred and cut, and blackened and defiled by fire, axe and sheepskins!".

In 1847, George placed two adverts in the *Sydney Morning Herald* advertising his wool-wash and rates. In addition to wool washing, George also offered a fellmongering service, prepping sheepskins in order for tanning. George operated the business from a storehouse on *Campbell's Wharf*, located in Circular Quay.

On 25 April 1847, George and Sarah were struck a terrible blow when their infant daughter, Ann Dixon, tragically died at the age of 11 months and 22 days.

Two months later on 21 June 1847, George and Sarah's second child, Ellen Dixon, was born in Willoughby. The child was named after another of George's sisters, Ellen Dixon of Sheffield. Sadly however, Ellen also died on 4 July 1847, at the age of 13 days.

Ann and Ellen Dixon were buried together in the old Sydney Burial Ground. Later in 1869 the cemetery was exhumed to make way for Sydney's Town Hall and Ann and Ellen's grave was transferred to Botany Bay cemetery on Bunnerong Road.

On 13 July 1847, George was working as a wool agent for Mr. Daniel Cooper of Middle Harbour, when he witnessed James Kingston illegally cutting down timber on Cooper's land. Kingston later faced court on the charge where he was found guilty and fined 40 shillings and 4 shillings 6 pence court costs.

George and Sarah's third child, Elizabeth G Dixon, was born on 19 September 1848 in Willoughby. The child was named after George's mother Elizabeth Dixon (née Dymond) of Sheffield.

Sometime around mid-1849, George's wife Sarah, "without any just cause or provocation", left the couple's home in Willoughby Falls. This was to become an on-going trend throughout their first 10 years of marriage.

On 5 July 1849, George took out a notice in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, cautioning the public that he would not take responsibility for any debts contracted by his wife.

One month later on 20 August 1849, their third daughter, Elizabeth, tragically died at the age of 11 months. It is unsure who was caring for Elizabeth upon the infant's death or whether Sarah had returned home at this stage.

SYDNEY. Nov 18. 1842.



Scots Church

Saint Andrew's Scots Church were George and Sarah were married.



'Willoughby Falls' by John Skinner Prout.

George and Sarah's luck finally changed on 23 January 1850, when their fourth child, Josepha Emily Dixon, was born in Willoughby. Josepha was likely named after George's uncle, Joseph Houtt Dixon, who he admired greatly and looked to for guidance.

The family's next Sydney residence was *Clydebank*, located at 43 Lower Fort Street, Miller's Point and owned by Robert Campbell Junior. The large two-storey house was built primarily of stone and brick, with a large yard and garden overlooking the harbour.

It was at this residence that George's fifth child, Eleanor Dixon, was born on 22 September 1851. The child was named after George's aunt, Eleanor Dixon (née Webster), the wife of Joseph Houtt Dixon.

On 9 February 1853, George's mother, Elizabeth Dixon (née Dymond), passed away at her home of *Burngreave Cottage*, located at 46 Burngreave Road, Pitts Moor. Elizabeth was 66 years old. At the time of her death, Elizabeth was being cared for by George's unmarried sisters Anne and Ellen and brother James Mark Dixon. Due to the time it took for mail to travel, George would not receive word of his mother's death for at least three months.

On 8 March 1853, John Campbell conveyed a portion of land fronting Lavender Bay (then known as Hulk Bay) to George by indenture of Lease and Release. The lease was stipulated for the term of 15 years at an annual cost of £5.

A few months after signing the lease, George had a change of heart and contemplated emigrating to New Zealand. On 3 December 1853, George sold his Lavender Bay lease to his wife's brother-in-law, James Boyd, for the amount of £500. Upon George's proposal to move to New Zealand, Sarah took Josepha and Eleanor and left their home.

George fought to gain possession of his two daughters via a writ of 'habeas corpus' brought against his wife. The court case was held on 16 December 1853, but was remanded in the hope that an arrangement could be settled upon by the two parties. The final ruling is not known, however it seems George was granted possession of both of his daughters.

On 23 January 1854, George was charged with wife desertion after having separated from Sarah. He was found guilty and sentenced to pay 25 shillings per week for twelve months towards Sarah's upkeep.

On 15 April 1854, George advertised for a 'respectable female' to take charge of Josepha and Eleanor on the passage to London. In return George offered to pay for the applicant's passage.

The trip however, appears to not have taken place, as on 6 July 1854, George charged his wife's brother-in-law, James Boyd, with assault. During the trial, a man by the name of William Henry Williamson, walked into the Court and after listening for a few minutes remarked "This an assault case, is it? I would suffer my head to be kicked off rather than bring a man to be tried before such _____ fools as those." As a result, Williamson was taken into custody and later sentenced to seven days in prison.

On 1 November 1854, John Campbell conveyed a portion of land in Milson's Point to George by indenture of Lease and Release. The land measured 2 rods 12 perches and was bounded by Lane Cove Road and Glen Street. The lease was stipulated for the term of 21 years at an annual cost of £5.

On 27 January 1855, George again placed a notice in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, cautioning the public against any debts incurred by his wife in his name.

On 12 March 1855, George was out speaking with Eliza Schomberg and her daughter Eliza Cattle, when his wife approached and made a remark, at which point George promptly left. Sarah was later injured in the altercation and the two parties appeared in Water Police Court regarding the matter. Sarah was acquitted of assault while Eliza Schomberg and Eliza Cattle were each fined 20 shillings along with court costs.

On 12 April 1855, George sold his Milson's Bay lease to William Dind, for the amount of £500. Sometime after this, George and Sarah reconciled their differences.



Miller's Point from Flagstaff Hill, 1842.

The Campbell family had previously been granted large land holdings on Limestone Plains near Queanbeyan and George was invited to join them in pioneering the area. George and Sarah took up their offer and relocated with their two daughters to the Queanbeyan district.

The exact date of their arrival in Queanbeyan is unclear, however the earliest known record of George was on 2 June 1857, when he signed witness to the marriage of Edmund Miles Ward and Margaret Collins at Saint John's Church of England in Canberra.

In 1860, George was charged by prominent landowner, William Davis of *Palmersville* and *Gungahleen* estates, for illegally driving cattle off his land. The case went before the Queanbeyan Police Court on 1 November 1860 but was dismissed by the magistrate. Ironically, William Davis would become George's neighbour the very next month.

The Robertson Land Acts of 1860 enabled a lot of smaller settlers to purchase land and establish homes. All Crown land purchased at the time was dependent on a set of conditions; the area being limited to 40 to 320 acres at £1 per acre, paying a deposit of one quarter of the purchase price, adding improvements to the value of £1 per acre, the selector residing on the land, and occupying the land for three years.

On 3 December 1860, George purchased Portion 6 in the Parish of Canberra, County of Murray. The property measured 264.5 acres and was purchased using a loan from his uncle, Joseph Hault Dixon of Sheffield. The location of the property was described at the time as "Canberra Plains" in the land district of Ginninderra.

It was on this property that George built his family's homestead, *Dundee*. The name was likely chosen to align with the Scottish heritage brought to the area by the Campbells, whose own estate was named *Duntroon*. The knoll on George's property was often referred to as Dixon's Hill.

George took up farming on his new property where he successfully grew some of the best wheat in the district. One particular variety that George grew was 'Rivet's Red', a bearded variety imported from England and said to have splendid heads.



A maize farmer husking corn.

Corner	Bearing	From	Links	N ^o of trees
b	to	tree	near	1/11
c	S 37° N	Apple	.60	1/11
d	E 31° N	"	.40	1/11
e	W 21° S	Dead tree	.12	1/11
f	W 10° N	Apple	.28	1/11
g	N 25° E	Gum	.11	1

The unit N^o of the year is marked on the tree

Report- These portions are well adapted for Agricultural Purposes
There is no surface water
They are plain and open forest

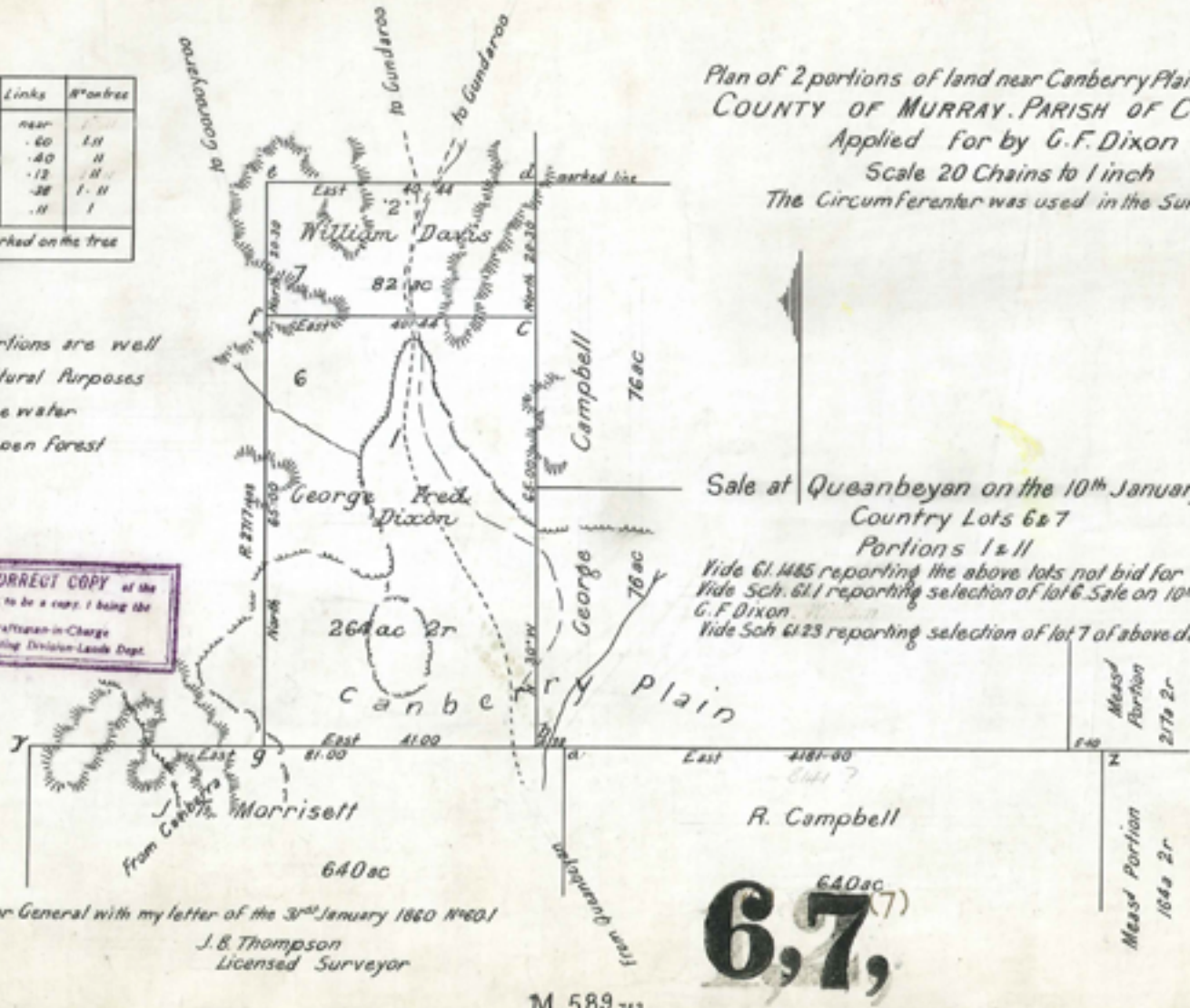
I CERTIFY that this is a CORRECT COPY of the original plan of which it purports to be a copy, I being the officer having the custody thereof.
J. B. Thompson
Draftsman-in-Charge
Camping Division-Lands Dept.
P. 2. 2. 11

C. W. Ed. 1/11

Transmitted to the Surveyor General with my letter of the 3rd January 1860 N^o 601
J. B. Thompson
Licensed Surveyor

M. 589 743

Plan of 2 portions of land near Canberra Plains in the
COUNTY OF MURRAY. PARISH OF CANBERRA
Applied for by G. F. Dixon
Scale 20 Chains to 1 inch
The Circumferenter was used in the Survey



Sale at Queanbeyan on the 10th January 1861
Country Lots 6 & 7
Portions 1 & 11
Vide G. 1485 reporting the above lots not bid for
Vide Sch. 611 reporting selection of lot 6. Sale on 10th Jan^y 1861
G. F. Dixon
Vide Sch 6123 reporting selection of lot 7 of above date of Sale by William Davis

6,7,

George's conditional purchase - Portion 6 in the Parish of Canberra, County of Murray. Today the property is a light industrial estate in the suburb of Mitchell, roughly bounded by Well Station Drive, Flemington Road, Sandford Street and Hoskins Street.

As the population of Ginninderra grew, a need for a local church to serve the district became apparent. Saint John's Church of England was a good distance away from Ginninderra and much time was spent travelling to and from for the services.

In 1861, George was contracted to build Saint Paul's Church in the Parish of Ginninderra, on land offered by Charles Campbell. William Davis was also a driving force in the church's construction, with £100 of its cost subscribed by Davis' relatives in Devon, England.

Saint Paul's Church was humble in comparison to Saint John's, measuring only 5 metres by 9 metres with a 2.5 metre square porch. It was constructed partly of slab and weatherboard, partly of lath and plaster and crowned with a shingle roof. Also included was a bell-cote, Gothic windows and a 5 feet square fireplace for warmth in winter. Saint Paul's Church opened for services on 12 May 1861 and also acted as a schoolhouse.

On 18 May 1861, George's neighbour, John Munday, was caught stealing firewood from George's land. Munday had long been employed as William Davis' gardener before taking up a lease on part of Davis' *Gungahleen* estate.

Munday faced court on 30 May 1861, where he pleaded that he did not know the land to be George's and that he had often taken firewood from the land. The Bench quickly formed the opinion that Munday must be taught to respect the rights of property. He was therefore found guilty and fined 1 shilling with 5 shillings damages and 11 shilling and 4 pence court costs.

On 30 May 1861, George posted a notice in the *Golden Age* cautioning that all stock found trespassing on his land would be impounded, and any parties removing the stock without giving notice would be prosecuted under the provisions of the Impounding Act.

The same year, George added his name to a petition seeking a post office for Ginninderra, dated 14 October 1861.



The church is thought to have been located near Block 1, Section 95 in the suburb of Evatt, bounded by Copeland Drive, Sharwood Crescent and Moynihan Street.



Following its closure in 1902, the building was severely damaged during a storm and allowed to fall into disrepair. Later being used as a stables.



'Ginninginderry "Ginninderra" Plains' watercolour by Robert Hoddle, circa 1830s.

On 13 March 1862, George appeared in Police Court in defence of his two daughters, Josepha and Eleanor. The girls had been charged with cruelty to milch cows, brought against them by John Wainwright. The case was dismissed due to discrepancy in the evidence.

On 29 March 1862, George and his daughter were out looking for his bullocks when they witnessed a boy by the name of Andrew Horrocks, the ward of John Wainwright, approach a mare outside a furrow marking the boundary of George's land. Three more of Wainwright's horses fed inside the boundary. George and his daughter went to a rise to watch and as soon as the boy began to drive the horses off the land, George approached him for trespassing. On 27 March 1862, Andrew Horrocks was summoned before the Police Magistrate. He was found guilty and fined 1 shillings and 7 shillings and 6 pence court costs.

On 8 December 1862, George's wife Sarah witnessed Andrew Horrocks maliciously pull down two middle railings of a fence, in which cattle could enter George's wheat crops. The case was heard in court however it was dismissed due to conflicting evidence.

On 20 April 1863, George had five bushels of maize stolen from his paddock. He followed dray tracks and a trail of discarded corn husks to the house of Andrew Wotherspoon, where he suspected Wotherspoon's sons to have stolen the maize. George rode on to Mr. George Campbell's property where he voiced his suspicions. In response, Campbell ordered his men to go and surround Wotherspoon's house and watch if the stolen property was removed. Campbell then gave George 7 shillings to arrange a search warrant. A few days later, George and a policeman searched Wotherspoon's property however nothing was found. As it turned out, a dray owned by Michael Dermody had passed by the previous day carrying a load of corn that he was transporting from his old paddock over the river to his newly purchased property up on the plain. Dermody's wife had been shucking the corn and discarding the husks on the ground as the dray went along.

Andrew Wotherspoon later wrote to the *Golden Age* on 28 April 1863 telling his side of the story, concerning a "litigious and quarrelsome person named Dixon".

This incident related back to an earlier altercation that took place between Wotherspoon and George Campbell. Wotherspoon had for three years, lived and taught as the schoolmaster in a building charitably donated by Campbell. On one particular occasion Wotherspoon's hens had fouled on Campbell's carriage that was housed adjacent to the schoolhouse. When approached for an apology Wotherspoon refused and the conversation turned unpleasant. Campbell wrote to the Dean of Sydney, stating his intention to withdraw the building from the school, on account of the schoolmaster's conduct. This brought about the instantly dismissal of Wotherspoon by the Dean.

The event was front page news in the *Golden Age* for weeks, culminating in a public meeting held at the Queanbeyan Court House on 7 May 1863. George sided vigorously with Campbell due to their friendship and at the meeting he verbally hissed and deplored those speaking up against Mr. Campbell. At one point in the meeting, John Gale, the editor of the *Golden Age*, rose to speak in defence of Wotherspoon. George remarked "You can show the cloven foot.", implying that Gale was of an evil or malicious nature. The devil being typically depicted with cloven hooves. Gale retorted, "No, but I can track bullock drays, and which way they are going.", alluding to George's own dispute with Wotherspoon. Gale continued "They had all heard of a certain highwayman who, to evade the trackers, had his horse's shoes put on backwards. Did the individual who had interrupted the meeting think the parties who he reported stole his corn had done the same to evade his scent?" The conflict was left to simmer until Wotherspoon left the district in 1864, having taken up a teaching position in Lismore.

In 1864, George was granted a license to cut timber on Crown Lands in the district of Queanbeyan, harvesting hardwood.

In October 1864, 19-year-old, John “the Kid” Dunn, joined up with notorious bushrangers, Ben Hall and John Gilbert. The gang terrorised the Southern Tablelands area for a good part of a year, robbing mail carriages and holding up outback farming stations. During this period, George was held up and robbed by Dunn on the Breadalbane Plains. Dunn was finally captured and hung for his crimes in Darlinghurst Gaol on 19 March 1866.

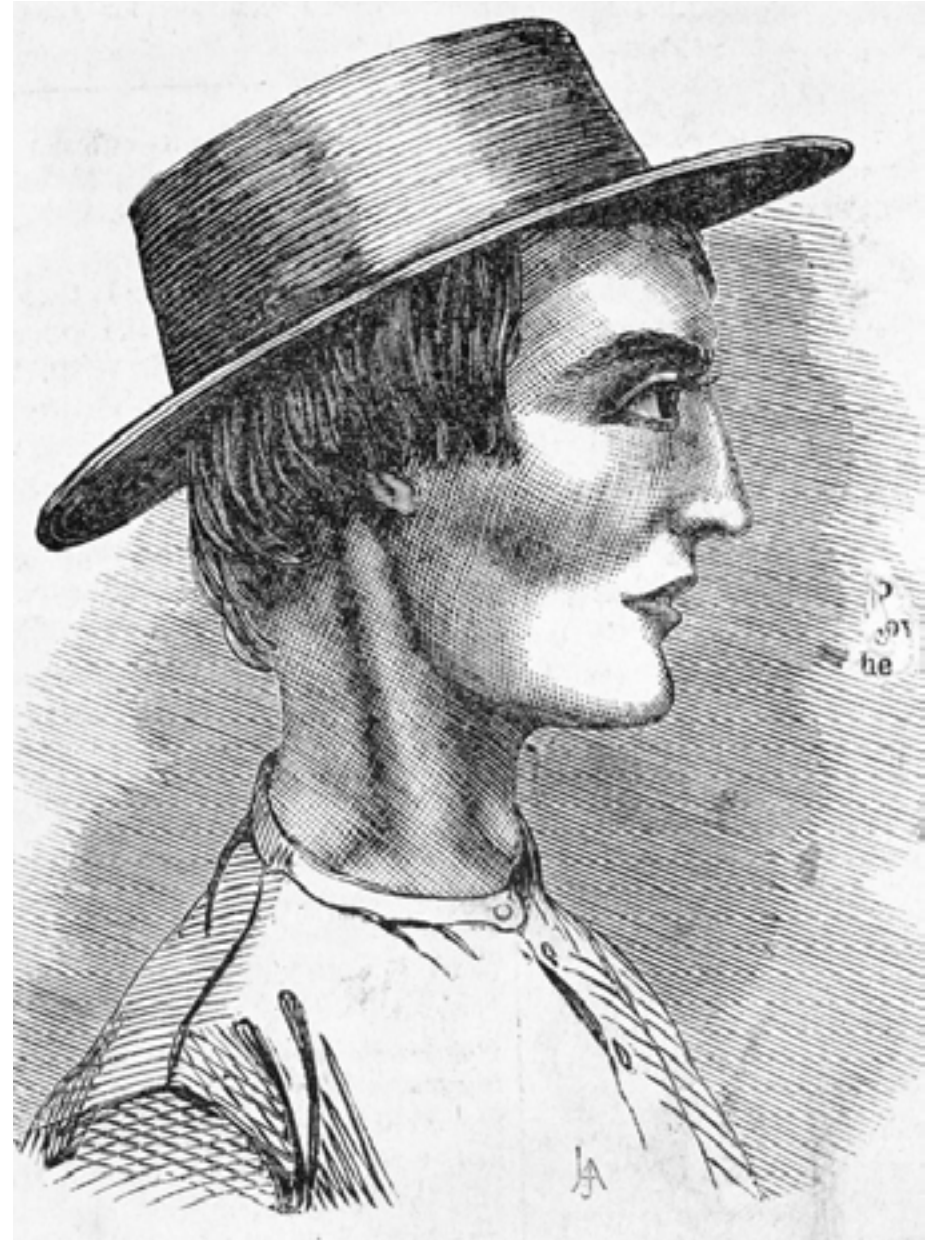
In the dry season of 1866, George lost a large number of cattle to the drought, costing him upwards of £70. As well as the dead cattle, George also lost all of his crops, having sown 65 acres of wheat which completely failed.

On 27 November 1866, George attended a meeting held at the Oddfellows’ Hall where he was appointed to the committee of the Queanbeyan Branch of the *NSW Free Settlers Protective Association*.

On 18 January 1868, George’s eldest daughter Josepha Emily Dixon married Joannes “John” Theodorus Josefus Brüning at Saint John’s Church of England in Canberra. The marriage was performed by Reverend Pierce Galliard Smith and was witnessed by James Allen and George’s younger daughter Eleanor. As Josepha was under the age of 21 George was required to give his consent to the marriage.

In the years following the 1866 drought the price of produce was so low that little or no profit was made by the region’s farmers. On 27 July 1868, George was adjudged to be insolvent, as a result of loss of crops and low prices. Several debts were proved in which liabilities came to a total of £655 18 shillings 7 pence. George’s assets totaled £453 leaving a deficiency of £202 18 shillings 7 pence.

George was allowed to keep his farm having come to an arrangement with his creditors. This was thanks largely to his uncle Joseph Hout Dixon who he owed a mortgage of £364. Also on the list of creditors were John Thomas Sydney, J. J. Wright, Robert Moloney, John Burke, William Davis, Francis Dunn (the grandfather of John Dunn), George Campbell, William Gorman, John Southwell, George Rottenberry, J. Shumack and George’s son-in-law Joannes Brüning.



Bushranger John “the Kid” Dunn, age 19.

On 14 December 1869, George's daughter Eleanor Dixon married James E. Tinham at the Wesleyan Parsonage Yard in Yass. The ceremony was performed by Reverend Henry William Torrington Pincombe and was witnessed by George's son-in-law Joannes Theodorus Josefus Brüning and the Reverend's wife Jane Pincombe. The ceremony was kept a secret from George, with Eleanor and James lying about their age so to not require George's consent.

Eleanor and James took up residence in a separate dwelling on George's Canberra property. In exchange James contributed on the property as a farmhand. Sometime around 1871, the pair left the property and moved to the nearby area of Mulligan Flats.

On 9 February 1871, George's son-in-law, Joannes, purchased 40-acres in the Parish of Weetangera. George's daughter Josepha and her family moved to the property where Joannes took up farming. Over the following seven years Joannes purchased an additional 240 acres which he added to his farm.

In July 1872, gold was discovered at Nanima (aka Nanama) in the Parish of Morumbateman, situated mid-way between the towns of Gunning, Yass and Canberra. Four reefs were discovered - the *Cosmopolitan*, the *Humbug*, the *Enterprise* and the *Little Wonder*. About three miles of ground was pegged out into claims or leases, as crowds of anxious gold hunters travelled from the surrounding districts to stake their claim, thus beginning the 'Nanama Rush'.

George registered a gold claim at Nanama of 200 feet, as 'claim No. 1 east', east boundary of Greenwood's lease of 10 acres. George however did not strike it rich. On 25 February 1875, he was again found to be insolvent but was released from sequestration upon paying his debts.

In October 1874, George donated £1 5 shillings to the Saint John's Parsonage Building Fund, organised by Mr. George Campbell's wife, Marianne Campbell (née Close).

On 26 November 1877, George's uncle Joseph Hault Dixon passed away in Sheffield, at the age of 87. In his will Joseph left George an inheritance of £1000 and the deed the Canberra Plains property, of which Joseph was mortgagee. Joseph and his wife Eleanor née Webster never had children of their own, and as such looked out for George from the time of his father's death in 1830.

On 3 February 1879, George advertised in the *Queanbeyan Age* for a contractor to sink a 500-yard tank to the depth of seven feet six inches.

On 19 November 1879, George again advertised in the *Queanbeyan Age* for a man to milk cows and to make himself generally useful on his farm.

In 1880, George's neighbour, William Davis, sold his *Gungahleen* estate to another large landowner by the name of Edward Kendall Crace. Like Davis, Crace advocated the position of the large landowners and actively worked against the interests of the many smaller and struggling farmers of the district. He challenged access to water, closed common roadways passing through his properties and disputed the location of his borders with neighbours.

On 18 August 1881, George fought Crace in court over right-of-way through Crace's *Gungahleen* estate, leading to the main highway from Queanbeyan to Yass. Access which the previous owner, William Davis, had granted George for the past 20 years. George was represented in court by Mr. Parr and Crace was represented by Mr. Gannon. After voicing various objections, right-of-way was agreed upon by Crace in exchange for the application being dropped.

Sometime after this, George leased his Canberra Plains property to a William Boyd who was to work it for many years and do quite well.

George and his wife Sarah semi-retired to Camperdown where George was classified as a 'gentleman', living off his accumulated wealth. George's daughter Josepha and her family also moved to Sydney, where they settled for a time in the neighbouring suburb of Forest Lodge.



George's uncle, Joseph Hault Dixon of Sheffield.

On 24 January 1884, George purchased Lot 14 of Handley Estate in Marrickville, for the sum of £43 and 5 shillings. The property was purchased from Jabez Cole and Henry Geering, the executors of the estate of Jabez Handley. The property fronted a total of 40 feet to Jabez Street by a depth of 150 feet and was located in the Parish of Petersham, County of Cumberland.

Although semi-retired, George continued to class on many large properties across New South Wales, including *Nanima*, *Rawden* and *Dunroon*.

In 1884, George was classing for Mr. Henry Palmer Blake of *Conimbia* estate. The area had been experiencing a drought, and all around there were a terrible number of dead sheep. Some of the squatters pulled the wool off their dead animals and sent it to Sydney for sale. The wool was in such bad condition that even after being sold it was in debt. George knowing what the different parts of the wool would be used for, classed it as if he was making it into cloth himself. Afterwards at a meeting of squatters, the question of the dead wool came up. Many said they had let it rot because it was worth nothing; while others wished they had, for it had been a dead loss. When Blake told them that he had washed the wool and sold it for 11d per lb they at first thought he was joking, but were soon convinced otherwise.

On 24 March 1886, George's son-in-law, James Tinham, died in Sutton, at the age of 48. George's daughter Eleanor was left widowed and caring for seven children with an eighth child yet to be born.

George convinced Eleanor to come and stay with them at their home in Camperdown for the remainder of her pregnancy. On 11 July 1886, George's nineteenth grandchild, Frederick Joseph Tinham was born at their home in Camperdown.

On 20 September 1886, George sold his Canberra Plains property to Hugh Read of Upper Gundaroo for the sum of £775 12 shillings 6 pence.

With the proceeds, George purchased two adjoining 40-acre grants, Portions 70 and 266 in the Parish of Goorooyarra. The sale took place on 9 March 1887 with each property costing £40. The two properties were situated on McLaughlin's Creek, in close proximity to the village of Sutton.

George invited his daughter Eleanor and her family to live on the McLaughlin's Creek property. In return, George's grandsons helped to work the farm for their grandfather.

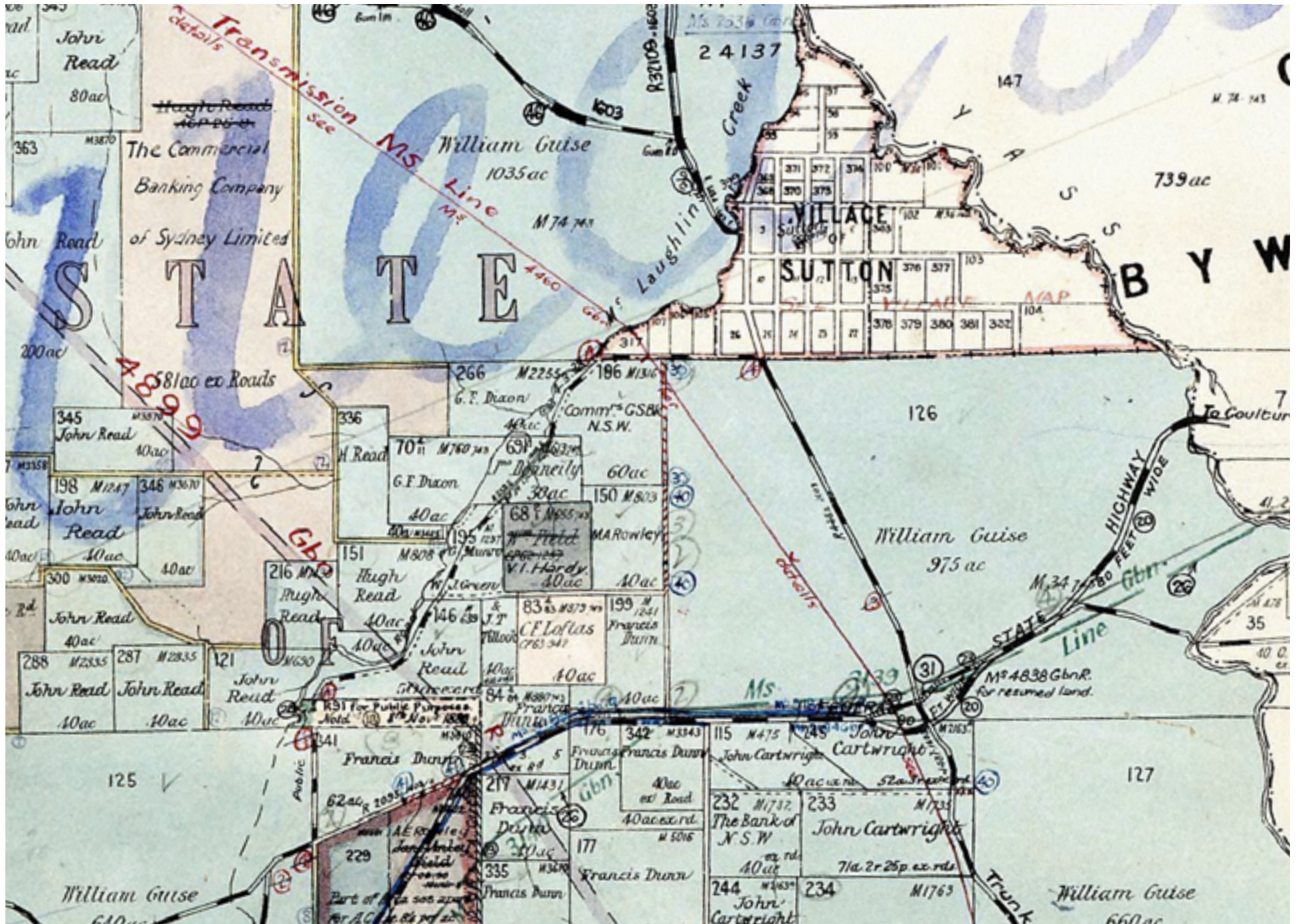
In 1889, George's daughter, Eleanor, re-married to a farmer by the name of William Edward Wells. The ceremony was held at the home of Reverend William Sparling in Lagoon Street, Goulburn and was witnessed by James Longley and the Reverend's wife, Mary Sparling.

On the 1891 New South Wales census, George and Sarah were recorded as living in Douglas Street, Stanmore.

In 1893, George and Sarah were living a few suburbs over in Dulwich Hill. George hired out a bedroom, sitting room and kitchen in their house to Hugh Frederick Davies and Olivia Wright Davis. The pair stayed at the residence for two months.

Later the next year on 3 June 1894, George was asked to give evidence in a divorce hearing between Hugh Frederick Davies and his wife Selina Davies. As it turned out, Olivia Wright Davis was Davies' housekeeper and the two had been having an affair. George gave a deposition in court stating that there was only one double bed in the room hired by Davies and that no bed was made up on the floor of the sitting-room.

On 1 April 1899, George sold his McLaughlin's Creek properties to Eliza Read, the wife of Hugh Read. It was around this time that George and Sarah retired to Goulburn to be closer to their daughter, Eleanor.



George's McLaughlin Creek properties - Portions 70 and 266 in the Parish of Gooroyarra, County of Murray.

On 13 March 1902, George purchased suburban Lots 11, 12 and 13 of section 2, subdivision of portions 95 and 96, in the town of Goulburn. The properties fronted a total of 17 feet to Edward Street in the suburb of Garfield. At the time of purchase the land was vacant with no attached dwellings.

George's wife, Sarah, passed away on New Year's Eve, 31 December 1902 at their home in North Goulburn. Sarah was 76 years old. Her cause of death was attributed as chronic liver disease and bronchitis.

Sarah was buried at the Old Presbyterian Cemetery on Mortis Street, Goulburn on 2 January 1903. George personally performed the duties of undertaker while Reverend Alexander Mitchell Gaul officiated the ceremony.

Following his wife's death, George moved in with his daughter Eleanor Wells on Sydney Road, North Goulburn.

George passed away on 4 June 1907 at his residence of North Goulburn. George was 86 years old. The cause of death was attributed as senile decay and syncope (collapse / loss of consciousness).

George was buried alongside his wife Sarah at the Old Presbyterian Cemetery in Goulburn on 6 June 1907. Their headstone was erected "by their loving daughter Eleanor" and the funeral was officiated by Reverend Alexander Mitchell Gauld.

In his will George provided a legacy of £10 to Josepha with the remaining real and personal estate going to his younger daughter Eleanor, minus funeral costs. George's assets were sworn at £60. This included his Edward Street and Jabez Street properties.



George and Sarah's grave and headstone.
Note: George's age is incorrectly inscribed.



George's eldest daughter, Josepha Emily Dixon



George's youngest daughter, Eleanor Dixon