

Giff, the Railway Man

Biography of Gifford Henry Eardley
(1899-1974)

2017-2022

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*Concern yourself but with today;
woo it and teach it to obey your will and wish.
Since time began today has been the friend of man,
but in his blindness and his sorrow.
He looks to yesterday and tomorrow.
Author Unknown*

Writing on history is not an easy task. The ability of the author to make decisions on the composition and style of the story, choice of illustrations and other support material to make the content appealing and an enjoyable reading experience for the audience, is one of the qualities that not many historians have. One must have a synthesis of a 'nut' researcher and of a good 'story teller,' which is a rare combination. I have yet to meet such an author, but had an unusual encounter whereby I learnt a lot from such an individual. Not that I morphed overnight into a great writer, which is very difficult for a non-English native speaker. Fortuitously, I chanced upon one such writer, historian and illustrator, who proved to be an exemplary model.

It all began with my enquiries about the Rockdale Art Award (1955-1977) a few years ago.¹ One short entry of the Second 1956 annual exhibition of the Rockdale Art Award catalogue launched my journey. Entry number 174 stated: "G. Eardley, Historical Sketches, Not for sale." Soon, that name provided me with the connection between the Award's exhibitions and the St George Historical Society Inc.

Initially, the entry lead to the local Historical Society, then to the Society's Museum in Lydham Hall at Bexley. One of the Hall's volunteers mentioned that a man called 'Gifford Eardley was a member of the Society [SGHS Inc] and published several books, remarking: 'For some reason he left his train collection to the Society.' The miniature train collection, books on local history and numerous articles in the SGHS bulletins increased my curiosity. I was offered to view Eardley's room at Lydham Hall. A short visit and a little information did not help much, so it was time to explore other avenues.

¹ Hidden Treasures, The Story of the Rockdale Art Award (1955-1977) and the Rockdale Council Art Collection, Olga Sedneva, 2017, entry to the Ron Rathbone Local History Prize

The entry, similar to the one found in the 1956' catalogue, also appeared in the Rockdale Art Award exhibition catalogues dated 1957 and 1972. Mr. G. Eardley's name was also present in the listing of the Art Committee members on the cover of almost every catalogue of the Rockdale Art Award exhibitions between 1956 and 1972. What was the connection between the trains, books and art exhibitions? It was about to become clear in February 2017, following a visit to the State library of NSW, where the photographs, manuscripts and over 3,000 (!) sketches of buildings, private homes and rural scenes are held.²

To my great disappointment, there were no biographical notes nor family photographs. With little hope and many doubts, but knowing for sure that Eardley died in 1974, and was interested in trains, I followed my instincts. A large binding of the newsletters of the Australian Railway History Society was requested for viewing.

Again, as with many times before, I found myself with a time-consuming task of flicking pages and 'scanning' the text with my eyes in the hope of spotting the name of Mr. G. Eardley. I was hoping to locate an obituary with Eardley's name amongst the 1974 issues. Why? What could be the best way of telling who the man was and for what he is to be remembered? Thank you, 'Mr. Common Sense,' you served me well and proved yourself reliable once again. The obituary stated that Gifford Eardley was a founding member of the Australian Railway Historical Society.³

Known affectionately as 'Giff' by close friends and family, Eardley was born in 1899 in Kilkenny, an industrial centre in South Australia. In 1902, when his father, Thomas Gifford Eardley⁴ was offered the position of an employee of the engineering firm of Tulloch's Phoenix Iron Works,⁵ the family moved to Sydney.⁶ At first settled in Rockdale, the family later moved to Kogarah, where young Giff attended a local public school. In 1918 he successfully passed exams with the Technical Education Department. Gifford's name appeared in the local newspapers which reported on

² State Library of NSW, Mitchell Library, courtesy of the family of G.H. Eardley, PXA 1335

³ The Australian Railway Historical Society, Bulletin, 1974, SL of NSW

⁴ Thomas Gifford Eardley died March 29, 1938. *The St George Call*, 15 April, 1938, page 2

⁵ Then located in Pyrmont, relocated to Rhodes in 1912 and shut in 1974. <https://pastlivesofthenearfuture.com/2012/04/12/tullochs-phoenix-iron-worksrhodes-corporate-park-rhodes-nsw/>

⁶ <http://gorillaart.com.au/about-time-history-walk/kilkenny-history/>



Tinplate model of pre-1924 NSWGR Locomotive made by Gifford Eardley
NSW Rail Museum, Thilmere

Eardley's 'high marks in Fitting and Machining, Trade Drawing and Trade Calculations.'⁷

As a boy, Giff loved watching steam trams 'trundling' one street down from his childhood home on Gray Street, Kogarah. He witnessed many happenings, from the Kogarah to Sans Souci steam tram to the early appearance of trains in the area.⁸ Trains became his life-long passion.

After the completion of an apprenticeship as a Fitter and Turner with Tullochs, a rolling stock manufacturer of the time,⁹ Eardley served the company for many decades. For a short time, he worked for the timber Preservation Company Timbrol Ltd.¹⁰

In 1925, the local newspapers reported on a beautiful Church ceremony, when Gifford married Eileen Carmichael,¹¹ and soon the young family moved to the house at 24 Duff Street, Arncliffe.¹² These childhood sweethearts were married for almost

⁷ *The St George Call*, 23 February, 1918, Page 3. *Technical Education. Kogarah Examination Results*

⁸ The Australian Railway Historical Society, Bulletin No. 449 – March 1975

⁹ http://railmotorsociety.org.au/rm_builders_page.htm; <https://www.ozsite.com.au/files/hallcollection1.htm>

¹⁰ Australia's first major organic chemical manufacturer. <http://www.chemlink.com.au/timbrol.htm>

¹¹ *The St George Call*, 9 October, 1925, page 5

¹² The Australian Railway Historical Society, Bulletin No. 449 – March 1975

50 years, had 5 children and 20 grandchildren. Eileen became a great support to her husband in his endeavours.

The attic of their home became a space for train models collected and made by Eardley. Over 20 of them are held in the NSW Rail Museum, Thirlmere.¹³

Giff's developed passion for both history and trains, subsequently resulted in him becoming a foundation member of the Australian Railway Historical Society and later joining the St George Historical Society.

It was there, in the Eardley's attic, a small "Railway Circle of Australia" of only 6 members was formed in early 1933. Soon this small group of train enthusiasts grew into the 'Great Railway Circle of Australasia.' In May 1936 the group's name was changed to Australian Railway and Locomotive Historical Society. "Concerned mostly with unusual mining, timber-getting and sugar cane type of railways," in 1952 the 'Light Rail Research group' started to collect records on Eardley's favourite topic. From 1951, this organisation became known as The Australian Railway History Society, an Australia-wide Society with 6 divisions across the country. Mr. Gifford Eardley was a Life Member from 1968.¹⁴

As a researcher and writer, Eardley started off in the late 1930s, when some of his articles appeared in local newspapers on Australian colliery railways and trams.¹⁵ He claimed, 'it is extremely interesting to look back on the beginning of street rail in Sydney town, particularly the early horse and steam tram systems, which have now vanished from human kind.'¹⁶ He considered the introduction of steam trams to be a revolution.

All of Giff's articles were a product of extensive research, his professional involvement with Tullochs' rolling stock manufacturing, extensive travelling and mostly passion. For example, 'Transporting the Black Diamond' was a result of a railway enthusiasts' tour to the Canberra-Monaro region. 'It was a bigger job than any previously contemplated,' wrote the publisher in the book's preface.

¹³ Notes from NSW Rail Museum, Thirlmere, NSW, via email communication

¹⁴ Obituary – Gifford Henry Eardley, The Australian Railway Historical Society, Bulletin number 449, May 1975, page 75

¹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 January, 1944, page 3; St George Call, 20 March, 1942 page 2; and a number of others

¹⁶ G. Eardley, Preface to *Thomas Saywell's Tramway 1887-1914: Rockdale to Lady Robinson Beach*, SGHS Inc Book

Soon he began to use a camera. The photographs were mostly of the trains and were printed first in the newsletters of the Australian Railway Society. It was stated in the minutes: “Mr. Gifford Eardley, has offered the Society the text of a number of books on the colliery railways of NSW.”¹⁷ Eardley shared his knowledge on the subject and that is how almost 30 books on Australian colliery railways, trams, architecture, people and places saw the light and remain the most comprehensive studies of Australian transport. Each one of those books displays the author’s “life-long love for steam traction with his talent as an author and his gift as an artist.”¹⁸

Giff’s artistic gift and his love for “all things beautiful whether of nature or man-made” reflected on his “more than a passing interest in the architecture of numerous buildings, some of which are of local historical interest.”¹⁹ Trained in ‘trade drawing,’ and having “his sketchbook and pencil ... with him”²⁰ everywhere he went, Eardley produced recordings ‘in unspoken language’²¹ of barns, cottages, churches, private houses and landscapes. The Prince of Wales Hotel at Sandringham, Lydham Hall in Bexley and Tempe House at Wolli Creek and many more all “most pleasing to the discerning eye.”²²

Giff, ‘a competent and very entertaining writer ... and accomplished illustrator,’²³ found his soul mate in his wife of 49 years, Eileen, a strong minded, practical and down to earth woman. Together with Eileen, his first reader, judge, editor, secretary, friend and follower, the Eardleys joined Rockdale Historical Society in its genesis. They joined it “not merely as members, but as active participants.”²⁴ The publication of the Society’s regular bulletins, as Gifford earlier had done for the Railway Historical Society, is continued by the current SGHS Inc Magazine “Our History.” Since the first Bulletin’s issue, Gifford drew and wrote ‘in his own masterly

¹⁷ Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin, June 1973

¹⁸ Sinclair, D. H., President, SGHS, Foreword to *The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tram*, SGHS Inc

¹⁹ Eardley, G. H., Preamble to *The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tram*, SGHS Inc

²⁰ The Australian Railway Historical Society, Bulletin No. 449, March 1975

²¹ Ald Ron Rathbone. *Our Heritage in Stone*, Foreword, SGHS Inc, May 1970

²² Gifford Eardley, *Our Heritage in Stone*, SGHS Inc, May 1970

²³ Rathbone. R. W., Foreword to Book 5, *Our Heritage in Stone*, SGHS Inc, 1970

²⁴ *A Word of Thank you*, SGHS Inc Bulletin, December 1989

manner,’²⁵ Eileen edited and dispatched the Society’s newsletters for almost 20 years. She was a secretary of the St George Historical Society for 13 years, ‘carrying out the onerous administrative tasks when the membership numbered 240, and meetings attendance was never less than 80 people.’ She carried out her duties for five Presidents: Sinclair, Stead, Lee, Abigail and Ellis, and remained secretary after her husband died, retiring only in her mid 80s. The lady, who ‘made things happen,’ Eileen was only the second member to become a Fellow of the SHGS; Ron Rathbone having been the first.

Eardley was the President of the St George Historical Society for only a year, circa 1966, by which time the Society’s membership had grown enormously making it the largest historical society within NSW, having almost six hundred subscribers. Alderman Ron Rathbone reflected on that time: “His [Eardley’s] presidency has brought to the St. George Historical Society a rare warmth of humanity which has not only resulted in a huge increase in membership but a blending together of those regular attenders at our meetings into one of the most pleasant and affable groups of people...”²⁶

Giff and Eileen tirelessly researched and published almost 500 pages of typed text on the subject of local architecture and people. At first their works were published in the SGHS bulletins, and later the manuscripts and illustrations were offered to the Society to publish as books; the same approach as Gifford proposed to the Railway Historical Society. Adding to that Giff’s work on railways, we can imagine the volume and importance of his legacy to local and transport history.

“*The Early Settlement at Wolli Creek*” was first published in the Society’s bulletin.²⁷ Eardley provided the Society with materials for another seven books, which remain available and assist readers to learn and navigate the area’s past.

With the popularity of Eardley’s articles and books on local history published by SGHS, it came as no surprise, but a great deal of disappointment to the Society’s members, when “*the unethical attitude of certain editors of local newspapers in publishing articles from our Society’s bulletin still persists. No*

²⁵ Napper, Charles William, Senior Vice President, SGHS, *All Stations to Como*, Foreword, SGHS Inc

²⁶ Rathbone, Ron, *Gifford Eardley. A Tribute*, SGHS Inc Bulletin, February 1975

²⁷ SGHS Inc Bulletin, June 1962

acknowledgment is given, either to the Society or the author."²⁸ The generosity of the Eardley's continued with Eileen depositing their works with the State Library of NSW²⁹ authorising the institution "to permit use and reproduction of the works within their collection."³⁰

Pencil drawings of many buildings now gone are carefully captured by Gifford Eardley on paper and preserved for future generations, providing a great visual source of historical and architectural information that "could never be recaptured."³¹ Appreciating attention to detail and craftsmanship of pictures, how could one disagree with Ron Rathbone, claiming that Eardley's "records for posterity deliver a wealth of historical knowledge in unwritten form!"³²

It must be mentioned that Eardley's ability to sketch once played a role in solving a crime in the local area. Glen Humphries based his book "*Night Terror on Kogarah*" on court transcripts, where a mistake was made in the spelling of Eardley's name.³³ The video by Peter Doyle "*Slasher Patrol: the prowler who shook 1950s Sydney*," is based on papers of Kingsgrove policeman Brian Doyle and gives full credit to "a knowledgeable local man, who lived in the area for 50 years: who produced a detailed "map of the scrubs, sewers, drains: which delivered an intimate knowledge of the area in question: "The maps helped Police to arrest the "Kingsgrove Slasher" in February 1958. For some reason, Doyle called Eardley "a bird watcher" in his report.³⁴

Eardley's involvement in the Police investigation began with an encounter that took place one night at Eardley's home. His youngest daughter Elaine Elizabeth, then 19, hit the trespasser with a shoe when he attempted to break into the house through a window. Scared of the unexpected resistance, the offender ran away.

²⁸ St George Historical Society's President Report (Don Sinclair) ended 30.6.1971

²⁹ State Library of NSW email in response to the author's request for reproduction permission for this publication

³⁰ Response from the SL of NSW dated 23/06/2017 via e-mail

³¹ Rathbone, R. W., *Gifford Eardley. A Tribute*, January 1975, SGHS Inc Archives

³² Ald. Rathbone, R. W., Foreword to *Our Heritage in Stone*, May 1970

³³ Humphries, Glen. "Night Terrors: The True Story of the Kingsgrove Slasher," 2019, ISBN 9780648032373 (paperback)

³⁴ Brian Doyle, personal archives; and *Slasher Patrol: the prowler who shook 1950s Sydney*, by Peter Doyle, The Guardian, video 5/03/2018



Top: the map drawn by Gifford Eardley.
Still shot from the documentary "Slasher Patrol: the prowler who shook 1950s Sydney," 2018

Left: Gifford Eardley
Photo from the personal archives of
superintendent Brian Doyle

A snapshot of *The Sun*, June 18, 1959

Reproduced with the permission of
Peter Doyle

The young lady was praised by the police for her action. “*The Sun*” published a front cover report “Girl hit out with shoe” on 18 June, 1959. After the family's ordeal, the father, Gifford Eardley, became a great help in catching the perpetrator, David Joseph Scanlon, ‘the Kingsgrove Slasher; was caught two months later at the place that Eardley predicted and marked on his hand drawn map. Scanlon was charged with eighteen counts of breaking into homes and assault.³⁵ Elaine Eardley provided her witness statement during the court hearing.³⁶

Along with Philip Geeves, an author and historian,³⁷ Eardley initiated the change of name from the Rockdale Historical Society to the current one over 50 years ago. This move extended the geographical ‘field of operation outside Rockdale Municipality, which ... strengthen it [SGHS] and enable it [SGHS] to expand.’³⁸

Eardley was the one who initiated and lead the Society’s first historical walks around Arncliffe. The August 1962, SGHS bulletin reported that ‘the crowd of 70 people’ turned up to attend regular meetings. Those walks brought to the Society many new members and established its reputation.

Eardley, a charismatic man, was the President of the St George Historical Society for only a year. That year, the Society grew into the largest within NSW having over 600 subscribers. Alderman R. W. Rathbone reflected on that time: “*His [Eardley’s] presidency has brought to the St. George Historical Society a rare warmth of humanity which has not only resulted in a huge increase in membership but a blending together of those regular attenders at our meetings into one of the most pleasant and affable groups of people...*”

In 1962, in response to the possible demolition of the Prince of Wales Hotel in Sandringham,³⁹ the St George Historical Society raised the idea of turning the

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UU9uM853M3I>; Brian Doyle, personal archives; and Slasher Patrol: the prowler who shook 1950s Sydney, by Peter Doyle, The Guardian, video 5/03/2018

³⁶ ³⁶ Humphries, Glen. “Night Terrors: The True Story of the Kingsgrove Slasher,” 2019, ISBN 9780648032373 (paperback)

³⁷ <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/geeves-philip-leslie-phil-12530>; Philip Geeves, *Rockdale, Its Beginning and Development*, Geeves, Philip and Jervis, James, Municipal Council of Rockdale, 1954

³⁸ SGHS Inc Bulletin, October 1962

³⁹ Now known as Primrose House, Sans Souci, NSW, and part of Scots College [OS]

building into Rockdale's Historical Museum.⁴⁰ A local historical and architectural gem was saved, however the very first and so far, the only house to be turned into a local history museum, Lydham Hall in Bexley, was only purchased by the then Rockdale Council in 1971. Alderman Ron Rathbone, the Honorary Secretary, played an instrumental role in purchasing the property and in the establishment of the museum. Over the years a few versions of the Lydham Hall story appeared; the one by Valmai Long published in the September 1970 issue of the SGHS Bulletin was illustrated by Gifford Eardley .

The Lydham Hall museum's collection grew rapidly. Amongst other locals, the Eardleys offered a large donation of their own items. A large chaise-longue and Giff's train collection was displayed in a dedicated room upstairs.⁴¹

Among the authors-members of the Society published by the SGHS, Eardley and Ron Rathbone are the most popular. Even though the Society attempted to encourage writing on history since the 1970s, no others have emerged, nor has any substantial research been produced. Encouraging writing on history, in 1983, the St George Historical Society conducted a writing competition on local history 'for students interested' during Heritage Week. A number of boys from Years 8 and 9 entered. Vince Araulo, Richard Tuckwell and Peter Douroudis respectively won the first three prizes.⁴²

In November 2005, Rockdale Council, 'having a responsibility to encourage current residents to record their history for future generations' established a local Literary History Scholarship 'to encourage the research into and writing of local history.' Now known as the Ron Rathbone Local History Prize,⁴³ the competition showcases those who are able to produce historically truthful and enjoyable to read writing. Every year the Prize is awarded 'with the funds allocated from the Council financial system.'⁴⁴ Gifford Eardley was one of those individuals possessed with just such a rare talent.

⁴⁰ SGHS Inc Bulletin, April 1962

⁴¹ SGHS Inc Bulletin, March-April 2003

⁴² SGHS Inc Bulletin, May 1983

⁴³ Currently titled as Ron Rathbone Local History Competition; <https://www.bayside.nsw.gov.au/community/arts-and-culture/ron-rathbone-local-history-competition>

⁴⁴ Mayoral Minute-Report 16/11/2005, item ORD21, Rockdale Council papers, Rockdale Local History Library

As well as carrying out his duties to both Societies, Giff spent time travelling extensively with his family. He always made time for “the ritualism of the Masonic Order and the High Anglican Church.” He served his Parish being a Choirmaster and a Warden at St David’s, Arncliffe, for many years.

The legacy of the Eardleys led me on another journey, to the rediscovery of several artists who used their visual story telling to record the past of this country. First I came across, Alan Gamble, who was responsible for the establishment of the Mosman Art Prize. He was later a great supporter of Rockdale’s Alderman V. M. Saunders in the latter’s effort in the establishment of the Rockdale Art Award.

With this the circle of my journey was almost complete, the puzzle solved and all that was left was to give “a word of sincere thanks to Mr. Gifford Eardley not only for “... books he has written on the Society's behalf, but also for the delightful essays he has contributed month by month to the Society's Bulletin.”⁴⁵ The books by Eardley are still popular and available from both the St George and Australian Railway Historical Societies.

As for my initial research on the Rockdale Art Award, it has been confirmed that Mr Gifford Henry Eardley was a member of the Art Committee that staged the annual exhibitions together with several Council Aldermen, members of historical, arts and other societies for almost 15 years. The former Rockdale Council purchased artworks for its collection over a period of 27 years from the Rockdale Art Award exhibitions. Just a few of these deliver the visual records of the local past as much as Eardley’s drawings. Most unfortunately, none have ever been placed on public display or exhibition.

The Award was forgotten. Paintings are hidden within the Council offices. Fortunately, drawings by Eardley remain easy to access and admire, in the State Library of NSW.

It was only in September 2022, decades since the Rockdale Art Award, Campbelltown Library staged the exhibition of Eardley’s original drawings. Eardleys’ daughter Elaine, the girl who hit Kingsgrove Slasher with the shoe, married Francis Rouen. They lived in Campbelltown, where their son Terry Rouen worked at Campbelltown Council for over 40 years. The family deposited original

⁴⁵ SGHS Inc Bulletin, March 1968

Gifford Eardley works depicting old houses within the area to the Campbelltown Library. The exhibition presented drawings along with recent photographs of existing buildings where possible, and reflected on stories of their owners and inhabitants.



Display at Campbelltown Library, Photo by author, September 2022

In 2020, the manuscript reproduced hereafter was located in the Georges River Library. Signed by Gifford Eardley, it seems not to be published before 2021. It was undated but most likely written in the early 1970s. Textual similarities with the notes on Lydham Hall available in the Museum, allow one to attribute material to the same author.

Disregarding some factual discrepancies, the content appears to be generally correct. And so far is the best literary interpretation of the Lydham Hall story. With no references nor bibliography, which seems to be the norm for all of his publications and those by his peers at the time, extensive comments were added reinforcing the importance of historical research and cross referencing.^{***}



Lydham, 1855

drawing by Gifford Eardley, SGHS Inc Bulletin, 1970

Lydham Hall, A Synopsis of Its History

By Gifford Eardley⁴⁶

The story of Lydham Hall told by Gifford Eardley is reproduced here with further comments based on historical documents. This text was published for the first time in 2021.

It requires a great deal of imagination in these modern days to envisage the primeval scene of rugged, tree covered and rocky bushland, which occupied both sides of Gannon's Forest Road in the eighteen-fifties. The area now occupied by the gracious sandstone home named Lydham Hall, formed part of the extensive grant of 1,300 acres,⁴⁷ known as the Bexley Estate,⁴⁸ made by Governor Brisbane to James Chandler during August 1822.⁴⁹ It is evident

⁴⁶ Unpublished manuscript, undated, typescript, 5p, [nd], Vertical File collection, Georges River Library, NSW, Local Studies Collection

⁴⁷ Chandler initially purchased 100 acres of land with the house and orchard from Mr Thomas Sylvester: Madden, B. J., Muir, Lesley, *Earlwood's Past*. Chandler's Grant initially was 1,200 acres in size. *The Australian*, Thursday, October 13, 1825, page 2. The grant of 1,200 acres, which together with 100 acres purchased from Mr Thomas Sylvester, makes 1,300 acres in total as claimed by Eardley

⁴⁸ Early maps prove that the property was misspelt as Becley and Beckley. Earliest mention of Bexley is dated 1824 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2182812>

⁴⁹ Please refer to Appendix 3 for further details

that little use was made of the huge unfenced property⁵⁰ and it changed ownership on several occasions.⁵¹ In 1850,⁵² it was in the possession of Charles Tindell⁵³ and 67⁵⁴ acres, comprising a portion of a rock walled gully, and its Southern Crest, at the head of Spring Creek was acquired by Joseph Davis. He came from Brede, a village near Winchelsea in the far eastern corner of Sussex.⁵⁵

Joseph Davis, a master butcher with retail premises in King Street, Newtown, then as now, a most fashionable suburb, used part of his Lydham Hill Estate in connection with his business.⁵⁶ Cattle were driven overland from the Homebush sale yards, via King's Grove, and the bush tracks now known as Stoney Creek Road and Forest Road, to his resting paddocks arranged on the low ground east of the Lydham Hill homestead.

⁵⁰ The 1837 land sale stated as follows: "The Valuable Estate of BEXLEY, "formerly the property of Mr. Chandler, containing 1300 Acres, distant about one Mile from Cook's River, and six Miles from Sydney by the intended NEW LINE OF ROAD to George's River, and about eight Miles by crossing Cook's River. This Property is abundantly stocked with timber suitable for every purpose. THE GARDEN, Six and a half Acres in extent, has been trenched, and contains upwards of 500 CHOICE FRUIT TREES, mostly in bearing, comprising about 70 Orange, with Lime, Citron, Shaddock, about 20 kinds of Apple, Pear, Plum, Walnut, Mulberry, Quince, Apricot, etc, together with a Vinery and Gardener's Cottage, a good Well of Water, and other conveniences. One Hundred Acres of this property nearest to Sydney has been cleared and stumped, and subdivided into convenient Paddocks, the soil of which is excellent. The whole property is well watered and grassed, and is well adapted for Cattle of all kinds." *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Tuesday, July 4, 1837, page 4. Sale of Land BEXLEY. Accessed via: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/502399>. Spelling preserved

⁵¹ It has been verified that by 1825 the land was in use for agricultural activities such as wine making and possibly horses. Chandler was also a member of the Agricultural Stock Club. *The Australian*, Thursday, October 13, 1825, page 2; *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Thursday, March 17, 1825; *The Australian*, Thursday, August 11, 1825, page 1; *The Australian*, Thursday, October 20, 1825, page 1; *The Monitor*, Saturday, February 24, 1827, page 1 etc. Refer to Appendix 3. *Table of ownership* for further details

⁵² The surveillance of the land parcel sized 67 acres was produced on November 1, 1859 at the request of Joseph Davis

⁵³ Charles Tindell owned only part of Chandler's land grant, but it is not yet clear, which part

⁵⁴ 50 acres as recorded in No 5688 *Application to Bring Lands Under the Provisions of the Real Property Act (26 Victoria No 9)*, October 1882, NSW State Archives Collection. Certificate of Title Vol 669 Fol 127 dated 11th October, 1883, stated 49 acres 1 rod 36 perches

⁵⁵ SGHS Inc Bulletin, May 1980. Ron Rathbone reported on the results of his research on Joseph Davis. Rathbone claimed that 1855 is not the year when Lydham was built as the land was not owned by Davis then. The name of the stonemason is also a very curious case as no documents were provided. It is possible that the information was provided by Mrs Victoria Hindmarsh verbally, David's granddaughter, during her visit of Lydham Hall as stated in the SGHS Inc Bulletin, May 1973. Joseph Davis purchased an allotments in Arncliffe and Bexley the same year - 1860. JD WILL

⁵⁶ Joseph Davis used to fatten his stock on Lydham Hill land, then taken it to slaughter house in Arncliffe, and then delivered to his shop in Newtown



The vast size of Chandler's 1,200 acres estate is seen on the background map. In fact it was the third largest after Lords Forest 1,950 acres owned by J. Townson; and 1,605 acres of Connells Brush owned by Dr R Thomson, App 1677. Chandler's land used to include the area currently encompassing Hurstville, Bexley, Kogarah and Rockdale. Image Name: *Parish of St George* CD title PMAPMN05 file name 14074301 Sheet 1 Map of County Cumberland Parish St George, Lands and Water Conservation 140743; AO Map No 275, undated

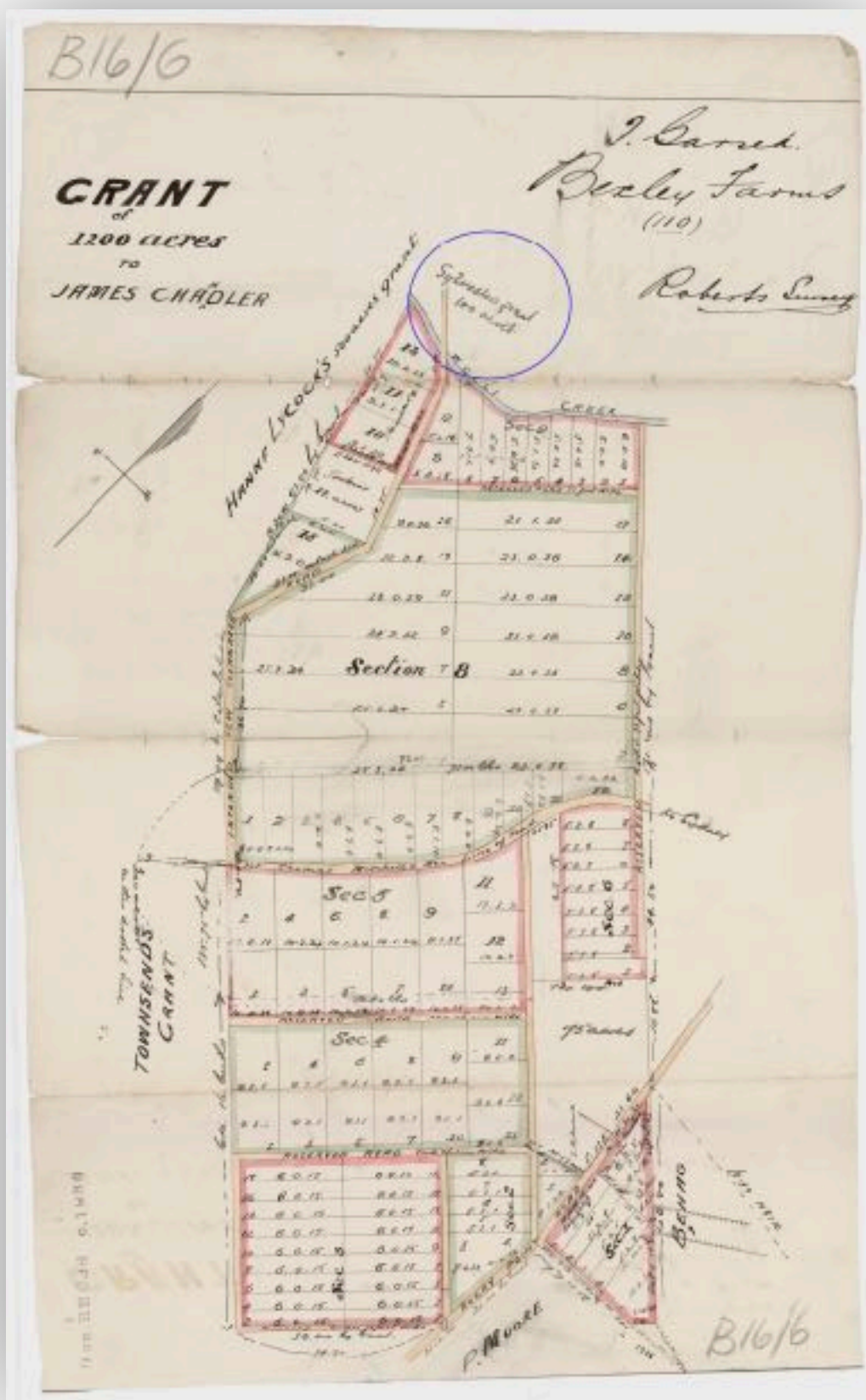
Insert left: *Map of Parish of Saint George County of Cumberland* and extract from it showing the misspelt Bexley as *Becley*. Source: County of Cumberland [cartographic material]. Maps/0031 via:

MMS ID: Image 991017182489702626. SL of NSW Call

Number File ID ojNxxgGO5bLy

Insert Right: The map of County Cumberland Parish St George *Beckley*, whereas only later maps have the name of Bexley written correctly. Source: Saint George [1840?] Maps/0032 State Library of NSW

Top line image: NRS-13836 Registers of Land Grants and Leases, 1822-1836, Volume 4 [7/449 p. 97] Reel 2561, NSW State Archives



J. Garsed, Bexley Farms, Grant of 1,200 acres to James Chandler by Roberts Survey subdivision map, c 1857-1859 [OS], State Library of NSW
Circled is the location of Thomas Sylvester's Farm purchased by Chandler before applying for the grant [OS]. Please refer to Annexure 5 Transcript and copies of pages 31-33 from the Conveyance as part of the Application 5688, and related to the allocation of 17 acres of the land, part of James Chandler's Grant.

Here, the animals were fattened on the lush pastures, and ample water for their needs was available from a large water hole, located near what is now the corner of Herbert and Tyrrell Streets, Rockdale.

From here, the cattle were transferred, as required, along the then meanderings of the Wollongong Road, to the slaughter yard owned by Joseph Davis. This was located on the alluvial flat, which later became the enclosed sporting ground known as Earl Park, and is now devoted to industrial purposes.⁵⁷

The Arncliffe slaughter yard became the centre of local meat supplies, and meat vans and the small cutting carts came from South Sydney, in particular for their provisions. The owners of nearby pig farms called for offal, and it is obvious that the route of Loftus Street was followed by carts conveying the hides to the tannery. This was situated on the eastern bank of Wolli Creek, adjacent to the present day Turrella Railway Station.

The site chosen by Joseph Davis for the erection of his homestead was on the crest of Lydham Hill.⁵⁸ This was one of the highest ridges between Cook's River, from which an embrative view eastwards is to be had of the landlocked Botany Bay and its opposing headlands, with the Pacific Ocean reaching to the horizon. Westward extends the hilly country towards Bankstown with the high range spreading out from Blackheath as a backdrop, whilst northwards above the environs of the City, the view is bounded by the wooded hills around the Normanhurst area.

⁵⁷ <https://leagueunlimited.com/news/earl-park-remembered-in-kogarah-park>. Joseph Davis Will, MHNSW-StAC: NRS-13660-3-[17/2286]-Series 3_17982 | Joseph Davis Date of death 24 January 1889, Granted on 6 March 1889

⁵⁸ 'Lydham is an old English name meaning 'the steep slope of a hill.' *Lydham Hall* file, The National Trust of Australia (NSW) Archives



Illustration 34
 068 - Z_SP_R11_66 - Rockdale,
 Lydham Hill house, garden, orchard -
 Gannon's Forest Rd, Clarence Rd,
 Frederick St, Stanley St, Herbert St,
 Oswald St, 1889
 State Library of NSW

The insert displays location of
 Lydham Hill buildings

Lydham Hall was originally approached by a private driveway from Gannon's Forest Road, which ended at the front of the house in circular fashion for the easy reversal of vehicles.⁵⁹ A branch led southwards and then eastwards to the coach-house and stables. The building of the house was placed in the capable hands of Mr James Benson,⁶⁰ the sandstone for the walls being quarried from the northern escarpment of the ridge near the intersection of the present Villiers Street and Arlington Street.⁶¹

The design is a particularly good example of the transition from the simplicity of the Georgian Colonial pattern of architecture to the more ornate style of the mid-Victorian era.⁶² The wide centrally placed hall is flanked on either side by a pair of large rooms, each with its beautiful Carrara marble fireplace. The interior woodwork of the doorways, window surrounds, casement shutters, and skirting is of hand polished Australian Red Cedar, and flooring of New Zealand Kauri. A narrow staircase at the southern side of the hall reaches the upper room lit by near dormer windows.

The windows facing north, east and south, are of the full length French pattern, what we know as French doors. This was to take advantage of the breezes. Those windows facing west are of the sliding sash patterned style small in area to keep the hot westerlies at bay. The windows are backed by louvered shutters of the 1860s style.

The verandahs with their outer edges supported by open-work cast iron columns, face the western, northern and southern sides of the house. Each corrugated iron sheet of the verandah roof is painted either red or stone, in

⁵⁹ Please see insert on illustration. A private carriageway was coming off the present Forest Road way and is drawn in the right top corner of the drawing

⁶⁰ The information was possibly provided verbally by Mrs Victoria Hindmarsh, Joseph Davis' grand daughter, who visited Lydham Hall in 1973. Further research was undertaken by Ron Rathbone in England and Australia. SGHS Inc Bulletin, May 1973. The name of the stonemason was changed with time but no confirmation on the man with either names arriving in Australia is located in 1855-1863. The name and acquaintance of Joseph Davis with the brothers Swen Johan Peter Benson (d.1927; known by JD since 1877) and Solomon Peter Benson (d.1904; known by JD since 1872). Unpublished *Lydham Hall Heritage Listing Research*, Janette Pelosi, June 2023

⁶¹ There were three limestone quarries within the area. *Gardiner park CMP*, excerpt, undated

⁶² Since the date of Lydham Hill erection was confirmed as circa 1875, the architectural style may be reconsidered

alternate fashion, as was customary at the time of its installation, and also for some fifty years afterwards.

The hip roof of the house is covered with blue slates and there are a series of small decorative brackets placed beneath the somewhat narrow eaves. The two wide chimneys are of unusual design, and each has a drip skirt placed above the flashing.

The kitchen and other outhouses were formed into a separate building which was located against the south-east corner of the house. This edifice was removed at an undetermined date, and portion of the stonework was used in the erection of another kitchen opening onto the southern wall of the south-western front room.

The kitchen garden, which supplied the homestead with fresh vegetables, was located at the corner of Lydham Avenue and Herbert Street. The front portion of the yard, divided by the driveway, was given over to shrubberies intermixed with more homely flowers. The passing traffic in those now far off day was sparse, mostly consisting of timber and firewood carts. And it has been said that they moved at night, lighting their way by means of the feeble glimmer of a candle placed inside an inverted 'bottomless' bottle.

The district was lonely and one man had the misfortune of being 'treed' all night by a pack of wild dogs close to the Forest Road. Others recounted experiences with horses waiting to bite, or kick them. The presence of snakes moving in from the surrounding bushland, obviously in search of mice, who had gained a living in the stables and chaff shed, was also far from pleasant.

When Joseph Davis gave his housewarming party, his friends came in their carriages and all manner of other horse drawn vehicles, cantering up the driveway to the front of the house. They were greeted by an orchestra engaged for this important occasion. The *Lydham Hall Mazurka* was especially

composed in honour of the event and a copy of this music is still kept at Lydham Hall.⁶³

There were five sons in the Davis family, namely Frederick, Herbert, Oswald, Stanley and Joseph, and the eldest grandson Clarence. The oldest son Frederick, was born a cripple and died at the early age of fifteen years.⁶⁴ He was buried in the graveyard attached to St George's Church of England at Hurstville.⁶⁵

In later years, when the Lydham Hill Estate was being subdivided into housing allotments, the streets were renamed after members of the family. It is unfortunate that the authorities have seen fit to rename Stanley Street as Tyrrell Street and Joseph Street as Lydham Avenue.⁶⁶

Joseph Davis Senior was renowned as a judge of beef. Unfortunately he became paralysed when lifting a heavy side of beef, and thereafter when it was necessary for him to travel, he rode in a specially converted Victoria. This was a kind of carriage for two people, which allowed him to recline at ease.

Because of his business interest, Joseph Davis did not take a prominent part in local affairs, although he was one of the founders and a generous benefactor of St George's Church of England at Hurstville, then known as Gannon's Forest. He also was a founder of Christ Church at Bexley, and likewise the old Bexley School.⁶⁷ His interest in this latter direction brought

⁶³ Based on Nellie Marchant's age when she wrote the 'Lidham Hill Mazurka', Lydham Hall must have been completed in late 1878 or early 1879. Unpublished *Lydham Hall Heritage Listing Research*, Janette Pelosi, June 2023

⁶⁴ NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Death Index 3016/1887: David Frederick J., Father Joseph Davis, Mother Ellen Joseph Davis, St Peters District

⁶⁵ Father and son were buried at the same Cemetery.

⁶⁶ The letter of Mrs Edith Mc Millan to the SGHS Inc, undated; reproduced in SGHS Inc Bulletin, February, 1978 states: "At the request of Mr Frank Marshall, 17 Lydham Avenue, and Mr McMillan, husband of Mrs Edith McMillan, the name of Joseph Street was changed to Lydham Avenue as Mr Frank Marshall simply did not like the street being named Joseph. Mrs Edith McMillan, who lived in the street for 63 years, wrote to the SGHS Inc regarding the original version of the event." The street name change was gazetted in 1917: Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales, Friday, May 25, 1917 [Issue No.78] Page 2755; <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/226215853>

⁶⁷ Bexley Public School Archives

forth a bitter comment from the headmistress of the Kogarah School, who accused wealthy land owners of ‘trying to boost the sale values of their land, her school was not capable of handling the population.’⁶⁸

It is understood that Joseph Davis also played his part in the formalisation of the Municipality of West Botany, later Rockdale.⁶⁹ Joseph Davis subdivided all but 18 acres of his holding, naming the streets on the Estate after his sons Frederick and Herbert, and eldest grandson Clarence (Dransfield). He arranged the subdivision of a large portion of his land, which came up for auction on Saturday, November 1, 1884.⁷⁰ No less than 135 allotments became available to those seeking home sites, when the first section of the Illawarra Railway was opened to Hurstville. Eight blocks facing Forest Road, both sides of Frederick Street, from Forest Road to Watkin Street were lined with home divisions. Nine faced Watkin Street and twenty-two were ranged along the southern side of Herbert Street.

Joseph Davis Senior died at the age of 63 years on January 24, 1889,⁷¹ and was buried in the family vault at St George’s Church, Hurstville,⁷² together with his son Frederick. After his death, his widow moved to Newtown.^{73,74} Now followed a second subdivision, auctioned by Messrs Richardson and Wrench on Saturday, August 31, 1889. The area surrounding Lydham Hill Estate was

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ PROPOSED ANNEXATION TO MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WEST BOTANY.—COUNTER-PETITION. 1886, May 10. *New South Wales Government Gazette (Sydney, NSW : 1832 - 1900)*, p. 3327. Retrieved June 5, 2023, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article221683922>

⁷⁰ MHNSW-StAC: NRS-13660-Series3_17982, Joseph Davis Will, 1887, Joseph Davis Probate

⁷¹ MHNSW-StAC: NRS-13660-3-[17/2286]-Series 3_17982 Joseph Davis Date of death 24 January 1889, Granted on 6 March 1889. Probates. Also in: Deceased Estate Files Index, 1880-1939 (Index 15): INX-15-214754 Davis Joseph Date of death 24/01/1889 Duty Paid Date 15/05/1889. Date has been confirmed by searches on NSW BDM Index. Provided by Janette Pelosi

⁷² The presence of the Davis family burial is not confirmed

⁷³ It is confirmed that Mrs Ellen Davis resided at Kensington House on Wilson Street, Newtown. Her son Joseph Davis remained at 285-287 King Street, Newtown. MHNSW-StAC: NRS-13660-5-717-Series4_36877 Ellen Davis Date of death 10/04/1906, Place of residence Newtown NSW. .Probates. Also in: Deceased Estate Files Index, 1880-1939 (Index 15: INX-15-22917 Davis E Date of death 10/04/1906 Date Duty Paid 19/07/1906. Date has been confirmed by searches on NSW BDM Index. Provided by Janette Pelosi

⁷⁴ The original burial was transferred to the Rookwood Cemetery to give way to parking area for the Church. The stained glass windows dedicated to Joseph Davis and the youngest child Frederick are located in the Church. They were paid for by Mrs Davis and children [2023-OS].

cut down to 1 acre 3 roods and 39 perches, Joseph Street (now Lydham Avenue) was formed, and the former driveway disappeared amidst the subdivision of sixteen allotments of which eight faced Forest Road and the remainder off Joseph Street.⁷⁵

The northern side of Herbert Street furnished seventeen home sites and the southern side of Clarence Road ten. This subdivision resulted in Oswald Street and Stanley Street being formed, and also the sale of the old homestead to a prominent Arncliffe resident, Frederick Gibbins. He resided at *Dappeto*, a fine house in Wollongong Road, now the Salvation Army Aged Persons' Complex, known as Macquarie Lodge.⁷⁶

The old homestead of Lydham Hall now came under a series of different occupiers, possibly on a letting basis. One of the tenants was to see the former Estate cut up and so quickly built upon. Another of the occupiers was James Stead, a botanist of note⁷⁷ and who was responsible according to one source of information, for the naming of Banksia Railway Station.⁷⁸ He also kept a private zoo, where emus and kangaroos led an idyllic life, together with fine blood stock imported from his stud in New Zealand.⁷⁹ The livestock were comfortably housed in neat buildings, provided with glass windows and shutters, resting on an underlay of bitumen. The former water wells of the household came in handy as snake pits, from which during one dry summer month, two reptiles escaped, much to the fear and consternation of the local housewives.

⁷⁵ Illustration 37 and NRS-13340-6 Deceased Estate files [Stamp Duties Office]

⁷⁶ Bell, Leonie, *Dappeto*, https://www.bayside.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/Dappeto_Leonie_Bell.pdf

⁷⁷ ADB: <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/stead-david-george-8634>

⁷⁸ NAMING A NEW RAILWAY STATION. (1906, March 28). *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, NSW : 1883 - 1930), p. 12. Retrieved July 5, 2023, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article239451696>

⁷⁹ Christina Stead talks to Rodney Wetherell, ABC, Radio Drama & Features, transcript, Recorded in September 1979, first broadcast in Sunday Night Radio Two on 24th February 1980, and repeated Radio Helicon on 2nd May 1983. In: *Christina Stead. 1902-1983*, Ian D. Gibbins, 1984, Clifton, Bristol, UK



Illustration 35

This aerial photo shows the view over Clarence Road, Lydham Avenue, Herbert Street and Forest Road near Broadford Street. Lydham Hall and the original Bexley Public School (now part of St Mary & St Mina's Coptic Orthodox College) can be seen in the photograph.
Local Studies Collection Bayside Council Library Service, NSW

The above photograph used to be displayed in the *Lydham Hall* Museum and dated 1934

Philip Geeves⁸⁰ has mentioned that the devotees of Australian Literature will be interested to learn that Lydham Hall was the childhood home of the distinguished authoress, Christina Stead. It seems, a strong autobiographical thread running through some of her writing captivated literary critics with such works as *The Man Who Loved Children* and *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, and certain stories even mention this house.⁸¹

Then on June 30, 1917, by order of the trustees of the late F. J. Gibbins, Mrs Emma Pattison, his oldest daughter and son-in-law, Messrs Richardson

⁸⁰ Philip Geeves - local resident, historian, RAHS member, an official historian of the Rockdale Municipality; the author of the first history of the Rockdale Municipality

⁸¹ Please refer to Stead's citations in the dedicated chapter *Christina Stead*

and Wrench⁸² held an auction of Lydham Hall⁸³ and the immediate area bounded by Joseph Street on the West and Oswald Street on the East. It is understood the property eventually came into the possession of Mr Oliver (Senior),⁸⁴ who as a blind man, sought to preserve the view eastwards from the house and to this end had a covenant placed on the adjacent blocks of land against the erection of any two-storied premises.⁸⁵ “He had lost his sight but he never forgot the view.”

The house, now in rather a dilapidated condition and under the threat of demolition, was acquired by Mr and Mrs George Long, who “with their own slender resources, saved Lydham Hall from the dubious boon of redevelopment.”⁸⁶

According to Mrs Long, footsteps were sometimes heard pacing the floors and treading the stairway. One foot drags as though a cripple is walking. The ghost was affectionately called Joseph by Mrs Long. She was confident that Joseph is looking for his money, which was never found after his death. “No domestic animal will stay in the house when the ghost walked.” A well disposed ghost is a fascinating adjunct to any old house.

⁸² Richardson & Wrench Real Estate Agency Network was founded in 1858: <https://www.randw.com.au/our-story.html> . The sale took place following instruction in the Gibbins' Will

⁸³ There has been longstanding confusion regarding the name of the property. The land was last gazetted as Lydham Hill in 1908; the name Lydham Hall appeared for the first time in 1917. Joseph street was re-named Lydham Avenue also in 1917. Please see illustrations on page 15

⁸⁴ Mr Oliver purchased Lydham Hall in 1922. After his passing in 1935, Lydham Hall was owned by his children, who consequently subdivided the land and sold Lydham Hall to Mr & Mrs Long in 1958. Please refer to Appendix 3. It is known that Mr Oliver was born around 1863; he was a native of Macclesfield, England. Mr Oliver used to be a member of the Yamba Woora Tennis Club: *St George Call*, Friday 14 October, 1921. It is also known that Mr Oliver, a Master Butcher and shipping provider; arrived in Queensland at the age of 21; then moved to Paddington, Sydney, later to Circular Quay; in 1925 Oliver formed the Binnia Downs Meat Company: *Daily Commercial News and Shipping List*, Obituary, February 13, 1935; Oliver owned a weatherboard cottage in Stoney Creek Road, in Hurstville, that was uninsured and ‘completely gutted,’ when burnt on December 15, 1933: *The Propellor*, 15 December 1933, page 4.

⁸⁵ Mr Oliver initially placed this order. *Building Ban. Historical views protected*. Article. Unsigned. Lydham Hall file, National Trust Archives

⁸⁶ Rockdale Municipal Council, Finance Committee 4/6/1970, page 881; Bayside Council Library, Local Studies

Lydham Hall was purchased by the Rockdale Municipal Council during October 1970, to function as a historical museum.⁸⁷ It was to commemorate in a practical manner the Centenary of the Municipality. The assistance of the St George Historical Society Inc was sought in the furtherance of the project, and their wholehearted cooperation was gained in the refurbishing of the interior and the arrangement of suitable exhibits. The Council in turn, became responsible for exterior maintenance, both to the building and the grounds. The Museum was officially opened on February, 20, 1971.⁸⁸

Furniture at Lydham Hall

Most of the furniture in Lydham Hall is on loan from the National Trust, and was part of the estate of the late Miss Mabel Holbeach of Wollongong Road, Arncliffe.⁸⁹ Miss Holbeach was housekeeper to the Richardson family who were direct descendants of Granny Oakes, the first white child born in NSW to free parents.⁹⁰ Her portrait is hung in the Lydham Hall drawing room.

The Richardson family once occupied Tempe House, the residence of A. B. Spark situated on the banks of Cooks River at Arncliffe. When this property was sold to the Roman Catholic Church authorities in 1883,⁹¹ the Richardsons built a fine two-storey house named Wickham at the North-Western corner of Princes Highway and Forest Road. Here the family resided until their property was compulsorily acquired by the NSW Housing Commission in the 1950s. Wickham was demolished to make way for a number of three storey blocks of flats.

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Report on Official Opening; Rockdale Municipal Council, Ordinary Meeting of Council 4/3/71, page 285 (72); Bayside Council Library, Local Studies

⁸⁹ Lydham Hall File National Trust of Australia (NSW Division) Archives

⁹⁰ Correspondence in Lydham Hall File National Trust of Australia (NSW Division) Archives

⁹¹ The Order of Good Samaritans

Some of the pieces of furniture now at Lydham Hall Museum are believed to have been with the Richardsons, when they lived at Tempe House. This collection includes the Victorian mahogany serpentine fronted double ended drawing room settee, the cedar break-front double-pedestal sideboard, and the two mahogany tub-shaped-back dining chairs in the drawing room, together with the mahogany half-tester bed, the dressing table, the settee, and the fine cedar wardrobe in the bedroom, all of which date from the 1860s.⁹²

Other valuable pieces include the early Victorian mahogany shaving stand, the walnut double-flap afternoon tea table, and the burr walnut toilet mirror placed on the chest of drawers. The furniture is exceptionally well preserved, and even the late Edwardian pieces are of interest. The St George Historical Society acknowledges the wonderful assistance of Mrs Hawkins of Forest Road, Bexley,⁹³ a niece of Miss Holbeach, through whose gracious kindness and good offices this furniture, together with some lovely pieces of chinaware, have been made available for display purposes.

Acknowledgment must also be made to the members of the SGHS Inc,⁹⁴ who have either loaned or donated to the Museum a fine range of glassware, silverware, china-ware and decorative ornaments, all of which are of great interest and relate to the early days of the St George area in particular.***

Gifford Eardley

⁹² Catalogue of Holbeach Furniture Collection, Lydham Hall File National Trust of Australia (NSW Division) Archives

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Please refer to the dedicated chapter in *Lydham Hall. Bricks & Mortar, Submission to the 2020 Ron Rathbone local history Prize*

Selected books on local and Australian history by Gifford Eardley

- *Emu Plains and thereabouts*, text by Joan Steege, 1972
- *Our Heritage in Stone*, book 6, SGHS, 1970
- *The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tramway*, book 4, SGHS, 1969
- *The Bulli Coal Mining Company*, NSW, 1954
- *The Early History of the Wolli Creek Valley*, book 1, SGHS, 1966
- *The Early History: Tempe & the Black Creek Valley*, book 7, SGHS, 1960-s
- *The Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway*, book 2, SGHS, 1967
- *The Life and Times of Azarias Cook*, with Warren Duff, SGHS Bulletin Nov-Dec 1993
- *All stations to Como*, book 5, SGHS, 1960-s
- *Thomas Saywell's Tramway 1887-1914: Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach*, book 3 of SGHS, 1966

Selected books on Railway history by Gifford Eardley

- *Colliery Lines of Merewether*, 1942
- *Emu Plains and thereabouts*, text by Joan Steege, 1980
- *Locomotives Beyond Recall*, 1976
- *Locomotives: a Guide*, Thirlmere Railway Museum, 1976
- *Old Lambton Colliery Railway* Scottish Australia, 1950
- *The Bulli Coal Mining Company*, NSW, 1954
- *The Shale Railways of NSW*, with Eric M. Stephens, 1974-2015
- *The Colliery Railways to Hexham*, 1955-1956
- *The Mittagong to Joadja Railway*, with E. M. Stephens, 1996
- *The Railways of the South Mainland Coalfield*, 1969
- *The Shale Railways of New South Wales*, 1974-2015, with Eric M. Stephens
- *The Railways of J. & A. Brown*, 1972
- *Transporting the Black Diamond*, 1963
- *Transporting the Black Diamond: Colliery Railways of the Illawarra District*, 1962

Selected Newspaper Articles by or on G.H.Eardley

The St George Call 23 February, 1918, page 3

TECHNICAL EDUCATION. KOGARAH EXAMINATION RESULTS.

The results of the 1917 examination of the Technical Education Department so far as relates to Kogarah are published hereunder.

The passes are shown in three grades, A, B and C; A indicating a standard of 83 p.c. and upwards, B a standard of not less than 70 and under 83 p.c.. and C a standard of not less than 60 and under 70 p.c. The passes are not given in order of merit in any of the grades.

In organised courses only those students who have reached a satisfactory standard in all the subjects included in any stage of a course are included in the pass lists. Students whose names do not appear should get into touch with their teachers with a view of getting information as to where they failed.

The following students have satisfactorily completed the various stages of the fitting and machining trade course: Stage I.: Gifford H. Eardley, and others

Fitting and Machining I. — Grade C: Gifford H. Eardley, and others

Trade Drawing. — Grade B: Gifford H. Eardley,

Trade Calculations: — Grade B: Gifford H. Eardley, Owen T. Griffiths. Grade

The St George Call, 9 October 1925, page 5

Wedding

A very pretty wedding was celebrated recently at a St. Paul's C. of E Kogarah, when Miss Eileen Doris Carmichael, second eldest daughter of Mrs. B. Carmichael, was married to Mr. Gifford Henry Eardley, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Eardley, both of Kogarah. The Rev. Stanley G. Best officiated. The service was fully choral.

The church was tastefully decorated (by friends of the bride), a large wedding bell, and the initials of the bridal couple were suspended in the chancel. The bride, who was given away by her brother, looked charming in a gown of ivory crepe de chine and georgette, with silver and feather trimmings and "orange blossoms." Her Brussels lace veil was worn with a Dutch cap of tulle, trimmed with orange blossom and pearls, and carried a shower bouquet of sweet peas and narcissus. The bridesmaids were: Miss Noreen Carmichael, wearing a frock of shell pink crepe de chine and georgette, with a black georgette hat, and Miss Laurel Eardley in hydrangea mauve georgette and black georgette hat. Both carried flower bouquets. Little Peggy Carmichael was train-bearer, in ivory satin, with silk fringe trimming, wearing a tulle veil and handmade flowers, carrying a basket of pale pink roses, little Norman Ralph as page, in ivory satin and silk fringe trimmings, carrying a crook. Mr. Albert Carlson, was best man, Mr. Leonard, Eardley's groomsman. A reception was held at the home of the bride's mother, who, in a gown of navy blue brocade crepe de chine, received her guests. Mrs. Eardley, mother of the bridegroom, wore a gown of mole cashmere de soie, with hat to match.

The St George Call, 20 March 1942 page 2

SAYWELL'S TRAMWAY, ROCKDALE. GIFFORD H. EARDLEY

For working the new electrified service on the Lady Robinson's Beach tramway, Mr. Saywell imported two four-wheel cars, which received the numbers C and 7, and ran them coupled together as a unit; the two overhead trolley poles and controls, etc., being attached to car No.C, while car No. 7 was a motor driven trail car. Both of these cars were of the saloon end loading type, and were mostly used when the traffic was light. For the heavy holiday and peak service, car No. 5, hauling two of the old steam trail cars was in general use. No. 5 also was used for hauling the coal trucks from Rockdale to the beach powerhouse, and in order to couple the trucks to the tram a small "dummy" flat topped truck was constructed from an old railway carriage. The old steam car shed at Rockdale burnt, but the "arcade" of shops remained intact, and are in general use at the present time. A serious breakdown of the electrical equipment at the powerhouse caused a

complete stoppage of the tram service. The Government Tramway Dept. was approached for assistance, and steam tram motor No. S2A, together with carriage No. 53B, were hired, until the trouble was rectified.

The Saywell Company decided to obtain a steam motor to guard against future stoppages, and purchased steam motor No. 10QA in February, 1905. This engine was kept at the end of the coal at the powerhouse. June, 1914, Saywell's tramway was purchased by the New South "Wales Tramway Department, who at once proceeded to overhaul the permanent way, and convert the overhead two wire system to their single wire standard equipment.

To assist with the per way relaying, etc., tram motor No. 37A was transferred from Sutherland and proceeded to and from Sandringham shed whilst this work was in progress. The Government introduced "N" class electric trams (Nos. 727, 619 and 622 being noted) to work the service. These ran coupled together, and on peak hour and holiday traffic, hauled steam trail cars 93B and 115B, on the push and pull system. The carriages taken over from Saywell's, being of no further use on the tramway, were sold. Cars No. 1 and 4 being sold to J. O'Connor in November, 1915; No. 5 finished up in a Lady Robinson's Beach back yard; and C and 7 were used as shelter sheds in the old Shady Nook pleasure grounds at the beach.

The stand-by steam motor No. 100A was sold to the Wanganui Tramway, New Zealand, and proceeded to Darling Harbour for shipment.

Saywell's still retained the power house and coal for the boilers was hauled over the tramway by the "N" class trams, the old dummy truck, now designated No. 3205, still being used for coupling purposes. When the power house finally closed down, this vehicle was transferred to the Kogarah-Sans Souci tramway.

The Government Tramway Dept. introduced a loop line at Farr Street, and constructed a three-road car shed near Aero Street.

In latter years the tramway was extended in a southerly direction along the beachfront, to Teralba Street, and a loop, for crossing purposes, was laid in at the eastern end of Bay Street.

Direct railway connection was also removed; all tram car transfers being now done by road transport. The service at the present time is handled by three two-car sets of "2P" class cars.

This concludes a brief history of the first Illawarra tramway system, and the author would be glad to hear from any reader who can add to the above information, or who has any old photographs of the early days of this interesting old tramway. Address c/o. "St. George Call"

The St George Call, 15 April 1938, page 2

OBITUARY

The death occurred at St. George District Hospital on March 29, 1938, of Thomas Gifford Eardley, at the age of 90 years. Deceased was an old Kogarah resident of Gray Street, and came to Sydney in 1902 from his native town of Hindmarsh, South Australia, and commenced work at Tulloch's Phoenix Iron Works (then at Pyrmont). In 1908 he became foreman boilermaker, which position he retained until his demise. He was actively interested in the welfare of St. Paul's C. of E., and was a Councillor for many years.

In his younger days he was also interested in the Kogarah School of Arts cricket team, and was a member of the St. George Motor Boat Club. The interment took place at the Woronora Cemetery, Rev. A. J. B. King officiating, and was largely attended by relatives and friends among whom were Messrs. W. Tulloch, J. Tulloch, R. Tulloch, A. Tulloch and R. Collerson (representing Tulloch's Phoenix Iron Works) and over 140 of his fellow employees. To Mrs. Eardley and family, Gifford, Leonard, Laurel and Ronald, we extend our sincere sympathy. Many beautiful floral tributes were received.

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