

Duncan Currie Was a Bullocky

The National Library of Australia offers a wonderful web resource called Trove. Only recently has it included issues of the Northern Star, hence my renewed enthusiasm in accessing references to Duncan Currie. But the entry below is from the Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser published in Grafton on Tuesday 16 November 1886. This article on p2 has the heading Dunoon, Richmond River. FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12.

“The Public school here is attended by about 40 children, but the building is not large enough to accommodate so many, and in hot weather especially the children suffer from inadequate ventilation. It is in a fine healthy position, and in the near future will require enlargement. Continuing my description of the place, and travelling in a northerly direction we have on the eastern side of the road the selections of Messrs. Murray, Brough, Stewart, Tainsh. and Thomson. The whole of these are thickly timbered, but not one of their owners are endeavouring to cultivate their holdings to any extent. On the western side of the road is a

50 acre selection, taken up before the adjacent land was reserved. On this is located the oldest inhabitant, and here is the first genuine attempt to test the capabilities of the land. Mr. Duncan Currie, the pioneer settler of this place, and originally engaged in the cedar trade, took up the land merely for the sake of the grass for his working bullocks. He has fenced off about five acres, and in this plot grows six kinds of apples, six of pears, Maltese and other sorts of oranges, citrons, Lisbon and common lemons, shaddock, West India limes, medlars, rose apple, pomegranate, plums (Japanese and American cherry), olives, almonds of two varieties, apricots, nectarines, three kinds of figs, Chinese raisins, Jack fruit, two sorts of mangoes, three of guavas, seven of grapes, bananas, passion fruit, pineapples, English blackberry, mulberries, and various kinds of peaches. All these thrive well and bear abundance of fruit. Mr. Currie’s selection is situated amongst a number of blocks that have been surveyed for the purpose of been, thrown open to selection, but the most of these excel it in quality”

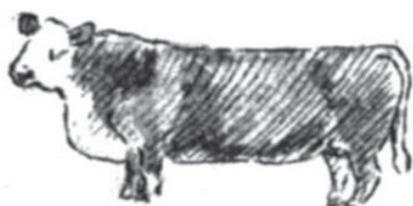
The Modanville Store now stands on that 50 acre portion selected by Duncan Currie on 17 June 1871. This was the original location of Dunoon. On the very same day his brother Archibald selected a portion at the major bend in the road just 500 m north of the Tullera Hall. But on 15 September a huge forest reserve was declared stretching as far as the



Nightcap Range. The southern boundary of the reserve ran through Archibald’s selection but Duncan’s selection was completely surrounded. By the time this article was printed however, both Currie brothers had acquired leaseholds adjacent to those selections. And Duncan had acquired the four portions on the east of the main road reaching as far as the parish boundary on Numulgi Creek Road. The settler just north of Numulgi Creek Road in the parish of Dunoon was none other than James Edgar James. On the other side of the road the parish of North Lismore stopped at Beddoes Road. Beddoes selected his land in the parish of Dunoon in 1888. Duncan Currie also selected another block in that year. It was in the parish of Dunoon even though it was south of Beddoes Road and right beside his first selection.

At one time, a steam driven saw mill was operating on Duncan Currie’s land but it failed because of the cost of carting water for the boilers. Later on, Modanville Dip was established there and while the actual dip bath was being dug they struck water. Where was that dip? Right under the store building!

Denis Matthews



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A New Archive Called Trove

Over the past four odd years the Northern Star has been indexed, a slow and laborious method. All of this has now been superseded by a new on-line digitalized programme called TROVE. If you are interested the Northern Star is coming on line up until 1954.

For example if you wanted to find the following article type in "Dunoon School" and follow the links. The article will then be available to be copied however the image will often be misspelt due to poor newsprint.

The address is <http://trove.nla.gov.au> be warned it is addictive but very interesting and another warning for people interested in their family history some of the information may be insensitive, newspapers in those days were not as sensitive with their reporting, or were they?

So here is the first TROVE edited article.

EMPIRE DAY AT DUNOON,

Empire Day was celebrated Dunoon Public School by a picnic and children's sports. Mr. Duncan Currie, who hails from the original Dunoon on

the Clyde, and who gave the name to his home here in the early days, opened proceeding by hoisting the Union Jack, which was saluted by the company. The children singing patriotic songs.

Addresses of an Interesting and instructive nature were given by Rev. W. D. McWraith and Councilor W. T. Missingham, both gentlemen presenting their matter in language suited to the varied audience, ranging from children and their grandfathers and grandmothers.

Mr. McIlwraith presented prizes to the pupils who had the highest marks in their respective classes at last quarterly examination as follows:- Best pupil in school. Grace Cameron : 5th class. Sidney McLeod; 4th class, Eva 'Morrls; 3rd class. Harry Caisey; 2nd class, Lilly Caisley; 1st class A George Fletcher; 1st class B. Sarah Funnell; 1st class, C, Peter Keech.

A March by the senior pupils followed. The boys carried flags and the girls bore floral arches. which made a suitable frame for their smiling faces. The intricate figures of the march were accomplished with poise and precision.

Thirty six children then gave an exhibition of Maypole dancing, which brought the spectacular part of the programme to conclusion, The kaleidoscopic effect of the gay ribbons and bright dresses caught the eye of all.

The company sat down to an excellent luncheon provided by Messrs. Sackett and Howard.

The afternoon was devoted to foot racing and other athletic events for the children, the sack race, wheelbarrow race and boot race, providing some laughable incidents for the spectators. The pole vaulting was a strenuous contest between C. King and L. Hill, both lads giving a fine exhibition, the former eventually winning.

As the sun approached the horizon the company dispersed to their homes; the children tired and happy, each one having some toy or trinket as a memento of the occasion.

Northern Star June 1914

Ian Murray



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