

The Donnithorne's of Camperdown Lodge



James Donnithorne in prime of life

In 1838 East India Company Judge and Master of the Mint James Donnithorne (1773-1852) retired to the Colony of New South Wales with his daughter Eliza Emily (1826-1886), originally settling in The Rocks where he leased stately a house on Cumberland Street, Bunkers Hill, while he had a new house at 36 King Street, Newtown, built or remodeled on the Indian bungalow he admired on the warm sub continent, a house he would come to call '*Camperdown Lodge*'. Not one to travel lightly or risk being unprepared he sent ahead the contents of his palatial homes in India, both his official East India Company residence and private estate in Contai including possessions he inherited from his parents in England and those he had amassed over the years. He also brought out his carriage, three thoroughbred horses with silver plated carriage harnesses, a telescope, piano and organ. Realizing he had brought too much he hired auctioneer *Mr. Stubbs* to liquidate a large proportion, advertisements in the *Sydney Gazette* call it the finest quality household furnishings available in the colony.



Newtown c1860

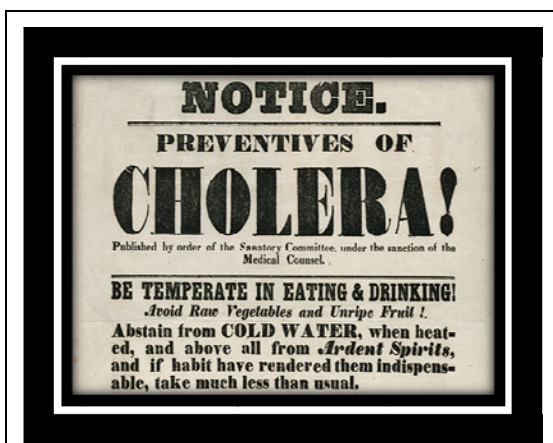
An industrious man he couldn't retire into idleness, he imported sugar from India. Invested extensively in NSW, Victoria and South Australia. Going into partnership with pioneer pastoralists, such as Robert Ebdon. In Victoria he owned vast tracts of land including a farming property called '*Montmorency*' in Eltham, which he purchased from Stuart Donaldson (1812-1867) the first Premier of NSW. He also owned a large sheep

station in Kyneton called '*St Agnes Station*' and stations in the Macedon Ranges. He also had extensive land holdings in NSW, from Port Stephens in the North to Kiama in the South and between. Business was good and as his wealth increased so did his generosity, "he joined many public movements."^[1] Sat on the Superintending Committee of the *Benevolent Society* and joined the *Sydney Association* to raise funds for settlers in need "and won renown for his 'unbounded hospitality'."^[1] Entertaining such colonial notables as John Nathaniel Gibbes (1787-1873) NSW Collector of Customs and Dr William Bland (1789-1868) who became friends, and hobnobbed with Governors Gipps and Fitzroy.

He had a good eye for real estate and purchased choice tracts of land, one of his most historic was '*Rodham Farm*' a pristine area of Sydney Harbor foreshore now known as Watson's Bay. History reveals him a man before his time in many of his ventures, the development of Watson's Bay a good example. In 1843 he marketed the site for suburban development, described it in his Sydney Morning Herald advertisement as having the potential of "becoming one of the most fashionable resorts of taste and fashion in town". Ideal to be "subdivided into portions suitable for Marine Villa Residences" and recommended those "who may not have visited this enchanting and interesting marine spot to take a boat and enjoy the sail down the harbour," excellent advice then as now. However due to its remoteness from town, the area having poor drainage and problems securing a constant fresh water supply for his advocated township it did not come to pass, the modern suburb is a realization of his vision back when the colony was young.

The content of correspondence with prominent early business figures reveals he was respected, revered and even feared as a man not to be trifled with and who did not suffer fools gladly. Exemplified by his 1848 Chancery Suit with former employee, William Ward, former superintendent of one of his Victorian properties, the former judge went after him with gusto until he had destroyed him. Ward was ruined, drank himself to death soon after. But beyond his worldly success the great treasure of his life was his daughter Eliza Emily, born on a ship called '*The Rose*' at the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, in 1826 as her parents were heading home to England to visit their sons boarding at Harrow School. Eliza became the sole surviving female of the family when the infamous Calcutta cholera outbreak of 1832 claimed the lives of her teenage sisters Penelope (1814-1832) & Catherine (1816-1832) along with their mother Sarah (1787-1832), whose epitaph in Kedgeree Cemetery declared that she died of a broken heart.

MOULMEIN.—MHOW.—KEDGEREE.—TIRHOOT.		393
To the Memory of Hugh Rose , of Kilravock in Scotland, a Civil Servant of the H. E. I. Company, who died at this place on the 29th Jan. 1847, and is here interred.		
MOULMEIN.		
Sacred to the Memory of Richard Olpherts Moore , son of Captain William and Cordelia Moore, of H. M. 45th Regiment, who departed this life on the 2d February 1831, aged 3 years, 3 months and 7 days.		
Sacred to the Memory of Lieut. Conan Hopton , of H. M. 63d Regt. who departed this life on the 8th September 1838, aged 23 years, sincerely lamented by all his brother-officers and friends, by whom he was universally beloved. This Tomb is erected by his brother-officers, as a memorial of the esteem and regard which they ever entertained for him whilst living, and their sincere sorrow for his early departure.		
Sacred to the Memory of Captain Alexander Edgar , H. M. 63d Regt. aged 28 years, who departed this life on the 7th April 1839, deeply and sincerely regretted by all his brother-officers and friends.		
Sacred to the Memory of William Foley , Esq. late of the 10th Regt. B. N. I.		
KEDGEREE.		
Sacred to the Memory of James Curtis Stapleton , Branch Pilot, H. C. M. died 14th August 1826, aged 46 years.		
Sacred to the Memory of Captain James Read , of the 1st Regt. B. N. I. who departed this life on the 23d Sept. 1826, aged 36 years. Forget me not.		
Sacred to the Memory of Catherine Maria Donnithorne , who departed this life at Hidgelly Contai, on the 11th day of June 1832, in the sixteenth year of her age. Also to the Memory of her sister, Penelope Donnithorne , who died at Kedgeree on the 13th day of the same month, in the eighteenth year of her age. And lastly, to the Memory of their fond mother, Sarah Eliza Donnithorne , the beloved and exemplary wife of James Donnithorne, Esq. of the Bengal Civil Service, who died of a broken heart at the Presidency, on the 4th day of September 1832, in the forty-fifth year of her age.		
W. A. Chalmer , late Judge and Magistrate of Bhaugulpore, died 16th January 1826, aged—years.		



Death notices and remembrances of deceased expatriates on the Indian sub-Continent in the early 1800's. Included are James Donnithorne's wife, Sarah, and his teenage daughters Catherine and Penelope. Following the loss of his wife and daughters during the infamous Calcutta Cholera outbreak of 1832, James resolves to quit India with his surviving daughter, Eliza, to establish a new life in the Colony of New South Wales.



Penelope & Eliza



William & Edward



Edward c12

Preceding the outbreak James had taken Eliza and her brothers Edward (1810-1885) & William (1807-1886) to Mysore on the other side of the country to visit relatives, a decision which almost certainly saved their lives. Becoming aware of his daughters illness he left his children in the safety of Mysore and rushed to his wife and daughters in Kedgerree, a village now known as Khijiri on the low lands near the mouth of the Hoogly, 68 miles below Calcutta. Arriving too late for his daughters but in time to nurse his distraught wife who died in his arms. Devastated by the sudden loss of half his family he decided to quit India, the surviving children became the center of his universe.

The Donnithorne's were descended from ancient Cornish stock, nobility whose lineage extended back into the mists of time and are to be found represented on the dynastic trees of many of England's most illustrious families. Cornwall and Devon is dotted with ruined castles, stately homes and time-worn gravestones paying homage to past generations wealth and status. Related to William the Conqueror generations of the family served Kings, Queens and Prince's of England in various capacities. James Donnithorne's father Nicholas (1725-1796) leased stately '*Coombe Hill House*' in London to enable his family to be close to the Royal Court and was the business representative of the Prince Regent in Cornwall, as Warden of the Stanneries he managed his tin mining interests in the Duchy. His uncle was Master of the Household for King George III.

James Donnithorne was born on April 2, 1773 in St Agnes, Cornwall, and baptized in Sir Christopher Wrens' historic church *St Mary Aldermanbury* in London on April 14. [102] Born into a world of aristocratic privilege with indulgent parents it isn't surprising he would run wild, his father introduced his teenage son to the Court of George III and he became bedazzled by the glamour and excess of Regency society. Becoming an intimate of the Prince Regent, later George IV, he joined a dissolute circle of young blue bloods and amassed a £30,000 debt in his fathers name to finance his extravagant lifestyle. It almost ruined the family and forced them to sell part of their ancestral estate to pay it off, forever estranging him from the land of his birth. Prompted by worsening scandal Parliament finally ordered the future King to clean up his act and cease dissolute associations, compelling his heartbroken father to send his beloved son into exile to save his position in the royal household, the Prince Regent advancing the funds which enabled James to become indentured with the East India Company and start a new life.

It was a difficult time for the family in general, their ancestral wealth was derived from tin mining in Cornwall but mismanagement of it by trustees caused ruin for Nicholas Donnithorne and he died soon after his son set sail for India. Departing England under a cloud of scandal and shame, no doubt mixed with fear and uncertainty, to pursue a new life in an alien land he arrived in India in 1793 and was given the job of writer, the bottom rung of the career ladder. A writer being akin to a human photocopier, one of a legion of men who spent their days in vast rooms making hand copies of documents, a tedious job he soon rebelled against. The adventurous side of his nature compelling him to seize the opportunity to join navigator Captain William Bampton charting the Torres Straits and Pacific onboard the ship '*Hormuzeer*'. The aim of the survey was to improve navigational charts for the Admiralty and scientific curiosity, but was also driven by a pragmatic desire to investigate natural resources for future exploitation. An island in the Torres Strait was, for a period of time, named after him and after being forced to return to India James settled down per his contractual obligations to the East India Company and took his career seriously. He married twice in India, his first wife Elizabeth, died in 1801 giving birth to their daughter Agnes. Then on October 7, 1807 he married Captain Bampton's daughter, Sarah Eliza, in Mirzapore near Culna. [103]

He possessed amazing drive, studied nights and worked his way up to the highest tiers of the East India Company. India Office records show he held numerous important posts, including: First Assistant Registrar of the Court of Appeals and Circuit in Patna in 1796 - Acting Judge and Magistrate at Rasughur afterwards Jessore in 1807 – Collector and Master of the Mint at Farrakabad in 1808 and in 1822 he was Third Member of the Revenue Board. Records reveal when he was Master of the Mint his annual income was £12,000, a phenomenal sum at the time akin to millions today. His natural acumen for business enabled him to amass a considerable fortune and influence while a young man, he owned a strawberry farm in India and wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty.



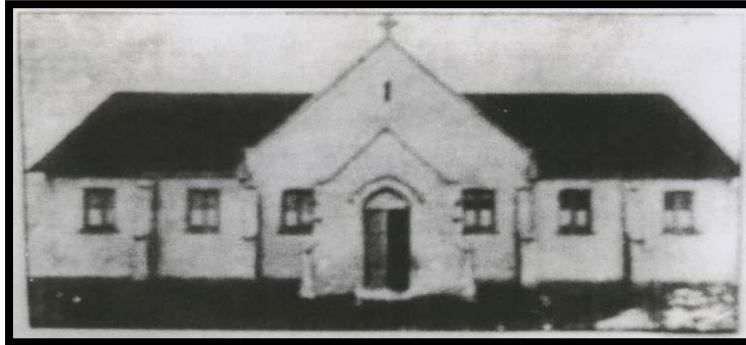
A fireworks display at '*Donnithorne Park*' the Indian estate of James Donnithorne. Celebrating the visit of Lord Hastings, Governor General of Bengal in 1815.

© The British Library

Prior to the death of his wife and daughters he had intended on retiring to London, to enable them to enter high society and enjoy all it had to offer however upon their death he decided to forego it. He had visited Australia as a youth with Captain Bampton when it was barely a colony and it left a lasting impression on him, he saw it as a land of opportunity. To help get his mind off the tragedies which had befallen him he through himself into his work, joined the '*Australian Association of Bengal*' whose aim was to establish regular communication between India and the Australian colonies to encourage trade and British colonists to resettle in Australia rather than return to England when indentured service had ended to help populate the continent. He visited the colonies several times on behalf of the Association giving speeches to businessmen and colonial officials, which is likely what induced him to settle there when he formally retired from the East India Company in 1838. Afterwards he continued to push for closer ties between the Australian colonies and India, he had great affection for the Indian people and was an advocate of the defeated Indian Labor Act of 1842 which was designed to enable Indian coolies (landless peasants) to settle in Australia to fill the chronic labor shortage. [SL]

Where women were concerned he had the reputation for being a playboy, although he always treated his lady loves with respect. If not for his scandal laden past and adulterous liaisons with Indian and English women, many resulting in illegitimate children, he would have been knighted or elevated to the peerage. That much aspired avenue closed off to him he thrust his social ambitions on his children, although he retained the title "Judge" long after ceasing to be one in India as a status symbol.

His sons joined the military and achieved officer status before marriage into illustrious British families, son Edward becoming a colonel in the army and amassing a considerable fortune in his own right through marriage and wise investments. As his only surviving daughter entered womanhood it was naturally assumed she would do the family proud by marriage into a respectable family, her father attempted to arrange marriages between her and the sons of former East India Company colleagues but Eliza rejected any idea of an arranged marriage. She probably knew his track record was poor, in 1818 he arranged the marriage of daughter Agnes, born to his first wife Elizabeth who died giving birth to her. Described at the time as "*seventeen, beautiful and accomplished*" to soldier Henry Swetenham, 26, a British soldier in India of aristocratic birth. Too young to be married a baby followed and the marriage fell apart, she fell under the spell of notorious society seducer Robert Adair Macnaghten and had an affair with disastrous consequence for all. Eliza's wise refusal to submit to her fathers demands led to intense friction, it was a time when girls were expected to unquestioningly obey fathers in such matters. During this difficult time she sought refuge at St Stephen's Church, Newtown. Affluent churches often held bible studies and philanthropic diversions for the daughters of the colonial elite. Young ladies forbidden employment due to their status, possessing time to be whiled away waiting for a suitable husband to be found. It was here Eliza is believed to have met an Englishman by the name of George Cuthbertson, a clerk with a shipping company. In a whirlwind romance he captured her affections, undoubtedly a breath of fresh air for a woman trapped in a suffocating gilded cage. The class divide was recognized as taboo so their relationship evolved in secret, clandestine meetings and stolen moments. On becoming aware of the relationship between the young couple her father erupted, forbade Eliza to see her suitor again but his demands fell upon deaf ears.



The Original St Stephens Church in Newtown

Most people are familiar with the gothic Edmund Blacket (1817-1883) masterpiece opened in 1874, which sits straddled by Camperdown Cemetery, however the St Stephens Eliza would have been familiar with was the original building situated on Victoria Road, just up the street from the present church. As the population grew and area gentrified it was considered too small and bland, after several years of fundraising the new one was constructed, the old St Stephens was kept on as a church hall until it was consumed by fire in 1938.

A formidable man James Donnithorne was known in business circles for his temper, the fuse of which grew shorter with the passing years and declining health. One famous story recounted by Colbert Moore, a journalist with defunct Sydney newspaper *The Sun* and childhood resident of Newtown where in the years after Eliza Emily Donnithorne's death his elders had befriended her elderly servants [AJA], one day while making his way from the stables to 'Camperdown Lodge' Mr. Donnithorne spotted George peering through a window looking for his daughter, fleeing hotly pursued by the father in a violent rage.

As a result Eliza was kept on a short chain and took to climbing out of her bedroom window to exchange a kiss with her unworthy suitor. Wherever possible her father would intrude and the courtship became a nerve wracking business, "in spite of the Judge's opposition the love match developed to the point where there was no use opposing it further. Judge Donnithorne tartly told his lovely daughter that even though she was marrying beneath her he would no longer oppose the union between her and Mr Cuthbertson. While giving his reluctant blessing he could not resist adding the comment that the young man would desert Eliza Emily after he had taken the best years of her life from her. The girl said she would take any risk involved." [2]

"A formal note was sent to Mr Cuthbertson advising him that he was required to present himself at *Camperdown Lodge*, King Street, Newtown, if he wished to hear something to his advantage. Cuthbertson turned up and Judge Donnithorne had a word with him. It was made clear that the Judge didn't really want to hand over his lovely daughter and if Cuthbertson made one false move after the wedding he would be hit with a whole series of legal mallets. It was explained to the young man that the wedding would take place on a certain date in 1848, the Judge said he would take care of all the arrangements and all that was expected of the groom was that he say "I do" when ordered to do so." [2]

Early newspapers record the story, of the authors “several of the authorities knew Newtown in the eighteen fifties and sixties and there is a measure of agreement on all significant details. I shall set it out as clearly as possible, using in the main the words of the journalists and local historians as recorded by J. M. Forde and W H. Freame. [3]

“The wedding was to have taken place on a certain morning; the bride and her maid were already dressed for the ceremony; the wedding-breakfast was laid in the long dining-room, a very fine apartment. The wedding guests assembled, the carriages were at the gates in readiness to convey the merry party to and from the church. The stage was set, but the chief actor did not turn up to keep his appointment. The wedding had to be postponed. Alas! for poor Miss Donnithorne, waiting so anxiously in her beautiful dress for the arrival of her lover, she never saw him again.” [4]

“Disappointed as the wedding guests were they generally agreed that it would be a sin to waste the splendid wedding feast that had been prepared. All eyes were turned towards the banqueting chamber when the young bride, normally a gentle uncomplaining soul cried in a bitter voice: “No one shall touch the wedding feast. My bridegroom shall come to me through that front door. Everything shall remain exactly as it is until he shall come!.” After speaking her mind she fainted away and the guests left hungry. “[2]

“How did our heroine bear the blow?. Well it appears to have completely prostrated her, and it is to be feared, to some extent, affected her reason. Her habits became decidedly eccentric after that wedding day, on which there was no wedding, for she never again left the house. She appears to have lost all interest in life, and the world forgetting, if not by the world forgot, she became almost as much a recluse as if she entered a nunnery. For more than thirty years — and long after her father and relatives had left the world — did the unfortunate lady reside at [Camperdown Lodge], her only solace being books ... The wedding breakfast remained on the dining table up to the day of Miss Donnithorne's death—she would not allow anything to be disturbed, and so the feast gradually mouldered away until nothing was left but dust and decay, fit emblems of the blighted existence of the fair young bride that was to have been.” [5]

After the aborted wedding Eliza remained in an emotional state for weeks demanding that the wedding finery be left untouched, her father honored these wishes in the interests of her mental health. The doors leading into the Long Dining Room were closed and locked, the wedding feast soon tumbling to decay at the mercy of insects and Australia's harsh climate. Unknown to all at the time she was carrying Cuthbertson's child and after a difficult pregnancy which ruined her health gave birth to a daughter, the child placed with the family of trusted employee Anne Kelly to avoid scandal, they were given a farming property in Murray Bridge, South Australia, as reward for this and other services rendered. The next generation would discover its origin and some change their surname to Donnithorne. [12] Eliza was told the baby died at birth, the loss of it on top of her groom would have made life unbearable, emotionally damaged, humiliated and heartbroken she retreated into her own world, a personal hell. After regaining her health “she refused to leave the house even for a minute or two on the grounds that she wanted to be home to greet her lover if and when he did come back to her.” [2]

“She insisted on leaving the front door of ‘*Camperdown Lodge*’ wide open. She wanted Mr Cuthbertson to be able to walk right in should he decide to return to her. Judge Donnithorne was irritated by this open door policy and kept slamming the portal shut. Every time he closed the door his daughter would quietly open it again. One result of all this was that ‘*Camperdown Lodge*’ was subject to the invasion of flies, mosquitoes, cats and dogs. Miss Donnithorne didn't seem to mind, but her father certainly did. He warned her that the ever open door was a clear invitation to thieves and robbers and even murderers to walk right in and do their wicked deeds. The girl was no so touched in the head that she failed to see the wisdom of his argument. But she did not stop leaving the front door open. She bought a huge and savage mastiff and tethered it in the hall as a guard dog” [2] before a heavy chain was fastened between the door and wall, neighbors and callers noting a candle glowing eerily between at night.

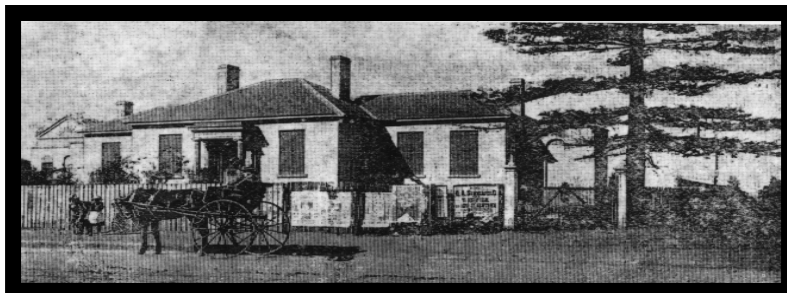
In an age where there were restrictions on female education and most professions were barred to them marriage was the ambition of every young woman, by age 18 it was their priority. Most married between 18 and 23, especially in the upper classes where marriage was considered a business deal, the consolidation of dynastic assets. As such marriage outside ones class was uncommon, money married money, love the exception not rule. A man had to prove he could keep his lady in the manner to which she was accustomed, the father of the bride often had to provide the groom with a dowry to take her off his hands. If the family of the bride wasn't sure of the grooms character a trust fund would be set up to protect future inheritance, as upon marriage control of all financial assets automatically went to the husband. Sadly being jilted wasn't uncommon in the Victorian era, there are numerous examples of men and women bolting when someone with more to offer came along. Abandoned brides suing for breach of promise, ending up embittered maiden aunts or withdrawing from society in disgrace not uncommon. [GF]

James Donnithorne died and was laid to rest in Camperdown Cemetery on May 25, 1852 by the Reverend William Broughton (1788-1853) the first Anglican Bishop of Sydney, survived by two sons and daughter Eliza who in an age tradition dictated the eldest son inherited all set a precedent by inheriting the overwhelming bulk of his estate. Which consisted of properties scattered across Australia, India and the United Kingdom along with a considerable fortune he had amassed. Unlike most unmarried women of the day Eliza's wealth gave her freedom, it enabled her to be her own woman, to live life on her own terms without needing to conform to societal expectations or the will of others for financial support. 26 and alone, without her fathers masterly hand dominating her life she became the eccentric recluse history will forever remember her as. She ordered all the windows of ‘*Camperdown Lodge*’ be closed, drapes drawn and shutters shut. She dismissed all but essential servants and having placed the house in a state of suspended animation, abandoned the greater interior to eternal darkness. “As time passed she did not lose her faith that one day her Mr Cuthbertson would come back to her. Against that day the wedding feast remained just as it was. The food of course began moldering away, the cutlery became tarnished and dust settled on the fine linen table cloths.” [2]

In the years ahead all her external needs were taken care of by her servants, primarily sisters Sarah (1830-1912) & Elizabeth (b1832) Bailey who emigrated to Australia as free settlers from Norton Mandeville, Essex, England. A brother called Walter and sister Mary had also emigrated and worked for the Donnithorne family for a time, but Sarah & Elizabeth were her most important. They lived in the servants quarters of '*Camperdown Lodge*', and were almost as reclusive as their mistress, never marrying and only leaving to conduct business or visit relatives who lived in the area. They were also charged by Edward Donnithorne, Eliza's brother, with the responsibility of keeping tabs on their mistress and reporting any problems which may arise to him. Members of the family, especially Eliza's niece Penelope who was touched by her romantic devotion to George, tried to persuade her to move to Britain and live with them but she insisted on remaining at her station at '*Camperdown Lodge*'. Her only refuge from the torments of a broke heart literature, "the mind that had avoided human contact for so long sought release in the printed page". [6] A library which increased with books imported from England and America, also purchased from door to door salesmen, one peddler recalled:

"I had the pleasure – or pain – of seeing Miss Donnithorne on one occasion. I was then 'knocking out a crust' as a book canvasser, a fairly profitable occupation in those far off days. Amongst my wares was a large family Bible, selling at 4 guineas. In my house to house tramp I struck *Camperdown Lodge*, the house of Miss Donnithorne, who I afterwards learned, was the daughter of an ex-Indian judge, and was a recluse. When I knocked on the door it was opened "on the chain" by an elderly attendant who inquired my business. On being told I saw Miss Donnithorne, tall and stately, clad in white, standing in the hall or passage. The attendant took the book and both retired to a room on the right hand side of the passage, presently the maid returned with four sovereigns and four shillings for which I thanked her and departed well pleased, but not at that moment aware of the historic personage with whom I had the Biblical deal." [7]

Although the general perception is that Eliza was detached from reality and immured in her house like Miss Havisham that wasn't quite the case, for many years after her fathers death she managed his portfolio of investments via business agents. She bought and sold property, made profits, she merely lived her private life on her own eccentric terms. "Sometimes on a dark, moonless night, the casual passerby caught a glimpse of the legendary Miss Donnithorne walking under the pine trees, black-gowned and shawled. Her face was not bared to the night air. She was just another shadow moving through the garden with the shadows of the trees and bushes - elusive, mysterious and ghostly. [6]



Camperdown Lodge in the last years of Eliza's life.

For generations locals avoided the house believing it haunted, one was Dr. George Henry Abbott (1867-1942), whose father Joseph, a wool-broker and local politician, moved the family to Newtown in the 1860's living opposite '*Camperdown Lodge*'. A keen historian George later served as President of *The Royal Australian Historical Society* and detailed how as a young child (c1870's) Eliza, the reclusive jilted bride, was the talk of the town and her mysterious, forlorn house a center of intrigue. Another was famed bookseller, publisher and antiquarian James Tyrrell (1875-1961) who lived close to '*Camperdown Lodge*' in the last years of Eliza's life. He would write in his autobiography, "In my day the Donnithorne residence came under the wide designation of 'haunted', and I was still young enough to keep to the other side of the road in passing it, especially at night. Still, I would glance fearfully over to its front door, which, by night or day, was always partly open, though fastened with a chain." He told antiques dealer Bill Bradshaw (1922-2009) how as a lad he'd muster his courage to creep up to the forlorn house, pull open a shutter to look inside and sometimes saw Eliza moving in the ghostly desolation. "*He told me*", Bill recalled, "*when he looked through the Dining Room window he could see the remnants of the wedding banquet that had been set out on the table, dusty and crumbled as was the furniture, she lived by candle light, turned day into night*". [T3]



appeals for the construction of St Andrews Cathedral in Sydney and the founding of the University of Sydney, just a few blocks away. As the years rolled by the interiors of the house all but fell to ruin, her minister the renowned Victorian cleric Canon Taylor recalled, "*There wasn't a decent piece of furniture in the house, everything had gone to rack and ruin; even the table covers were rotting and falling to pieces. But it wasn't because Miss Donnithorne hadn't any money. Oh, no. But she was a strange lady*". [3]

"How she behaved, in the extraordinary privacy of her own home, can never be known to us. But neighbors will talk; and Miss Donnithorne, by her way of life, positively threw down the gauntlet to hers". [3] The publication of Charles Dickens '*Great Expectations*' coincided with Eliza's life and made her an unwitting celebrity, in latter years people traveled across Sydney to see '*Camperdown Lodge*'. The only surviving photograph of the house is testament to the fame she achieved in life, it was taken c1880 on a glass plate by a photographer hired by Mrs. A. F. Foster "an enthusiast of all things in all things relating to old Sydney" [7] who sits grandly in the sulky outside the forlorn house.

In the years which followed locals became convinced Eliza was Dickens inspiration for Miss Havisham, “the case for the identification of Miss Donnithorne with Miss Havisham is circumstantial but there are no inconsistencies between the two and no impossibilities in chronology.” [3] Literary historians will argue that Dickens didn’t need her to create his jilted bride, that there are similar candidates who were well known to him, however there are many intriguing links between Eliza and the great man of letters.

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) had a deep-seated interest in Australia, saw it as a place of opportunity and even encouraged two of his sons to emigrate there. Son, Edward Dickens (1852-1902), later becoming a Member of the NSW Parliament (1889-1894) where he served with distinction. The great writer never visited himself but it features in highly accurate detail in many of his works, notably ‘*Great Expectations*’. He obtained some of his information on colonial life from two Sydney researchers, one lived in Redfern and the other North Sydney. He also had “numerous friends and acquaintances who settled in Australia, such as Alfred Lutwyche (1810-1880) who worked with him in London as a parliamentary reporter in the 1830’s. Called to the bar in 1840 he worked as a barrister and legal journalist until 1853 when he moved to Sydney, where he worked as a journalist before resuming his legal career and becoming a judge. Another was Richard Horne (1802-1884), who worked for Dickens before moving to Australia in 1852. They both sent him letters detailing curious aspects of life in the colonies and personalities encountered knowing he could use it as source material for future novels,” [8] they could easily have conveyed the Donnithorne story to him.

“On 30 March 1850, Dickens brought out the first issue of a weekly periodical, *Household Words*, which flourished for ten years and became the most widely read periodical in England. From the very first issue Australia was widely publicized as a land of opportunity. Australian stories and sketches appear steadily through the issues. Such stories as: ‘*Pictures of Life in Australia*’; ‘*A Bundle of Emigrants’ Letters*’; ‘*Two-handed Dick the Stockman*’; and ‘*John Chinaman in Australia*’. The latter article, which appeared in the issue of 17 April 1858, is a most detailed colourful word picture of the Chinese people who were at that time numerous in Australia. The exactness of the observations indicates that the writer was undoubtedly an eye-witness. There were articles on gold-diggers, a ‘*Digger’s Diary*’, and even the story of ‘*Fisher’s Ghost*’ was told with much emphasis on the eeriness of the tale. Wainwright, the elegant painter, poisoner convict, and Sir Henry Brown Hayes and the Irish sods he placed around his Vacluse home to drive snakes away, all these stories and more Dickens included in his *Household Words*. When ‘*Great Expectations*’ was published in 1860-61 Dickens had then been receiving and printing stories of Australian life for ten years. Miss Donnithorne was still alive in 1860 (she lived to 1886) so naturally her story had to be disguised as fiction.” [8]

Charles Dickens was keen to visit Australia himself, was offered a staggering £10,000 to do a literary tour. “He contemplated a lecture tour of Australia in 1862 and intended to write a travel book, ‘*The Uncommercial Traveler Upside Down*’, but the tour was abandoned” [9] due to the time it took to get to Australia, tour the country sufficiently to make it financially profitable and then return home. He was worried that the prolonged absence would result in his literary star fading with his important home audience.

The Victorian town of Kyneton (approximately 85Km from Melbourne) presents another possible link between Donnithorne and Dickens, in 1858 social reformer Caroline Chisholm (1808-1877) settled in Kyneton after having lived in Sydney on her arrival with husband Archibald, a captain with the East India Company. They arrived in Sydney onboard the '*Emerald Isle*' which also conveyed James Donnithorne from Calcutta, India. No specific mention of children is made in the ships passenger manifest only their presence in general, so we have no way to know if young Eliza accompanied him on this voyage but she likely did. Arriving in Sydney in September 1838 after a seven month voyage from the other side of the world it is highly likely that their paths would have crossed many times on the small ship, it would not have escaped the attention of Archibald Chisholm that the retiring Governor of the East India Company's Mint was sailing with them. "They would certainly have met," said historian of the '*Friends of Caroline Chisholm*' Rodney Stinson, "on the voyage that brought the Chisholm's and Donnithorne's to Australia. The Chisholm's on that voyage would, as in their later long sea travels, have been cabin passengers, as James Donnithorne would have been given his status and income. They would have dined at the Captain's table and otherwise conversed and recreated together. I am saying this not from historically documented records about Caroline Chisholm but from my understanding of the prevailing practices at the time."

In "Kyneton Chisholm owned a store and her husband was a local magistrate. While she lived here she began to establish a series of inexpensive overnight shelters for travelers on the Mt Alexander Rd (now the Calder Highway), a road which was commonly used by prospectors heading to the central goldfields." [10] This was after James Donnithorne had died and Eliza had been jilted but he was still held in high esteem by locals not least due to his generosity, having taken in elderly and destitute laborers he had encountered on his travels in the area giving them employment and lodgings on one of his stations in the area. Townspeople regarded him as a founding father, he had done a lot to help the region develop, Chisholm could have discovered the fate of her ship mates daughter there.

Chisholm was a friend of Charles Dickens and as appalled as he by the living conditions brought about by the industrial revolution in England, shared his vision of Australia as a place the British working class could go to find a better life and helped them do so. She was a frequent correspondent of his sending back details on life in the colonies and he greatly admired the work she did, when "Household Words began publication in 1850 his first article was an approving exposition of Mrs Chisholm's Family Colonization Loan Society." [9] She moved back to Sydney in 1859 and in 1862 opened a girls boarding school near Newtown, not far from '*Camperdown Lodge*'. It's possible she or her husband came across the sensational story of the former East India Company executives daughter, whom they may well have met on the voyage to Australia, and conveyed it to Dickens in one of her many letters (some dictated to a secretary) or a conversation she had with him when she visited England to advocate settlement in a nationwide tour.

Another link discovered by Dr. David Parker, curator of the *Dickens House Museum* in London, is India. Dickens' son Walter worked for the East India Company prior to the publication of '*Great Expectations*', in the former district of James Donnithorne. Walter sent his father letters full of local information and gossip he made use of in his novels, the blighted life of a former executive's daughter could have been conveyed this way.

The possibility also remains that Dickens came across the story on his own, from the late 1830's until his death in 1870 he often visited the London borough of Twickenham and enjoyed writing there. He rented a cottage on picturesque Eel Pie Island and a house at Ailsa Park Villas, in 1837 Edward Donnithorne and his family lived just a few doors down in the same terrace prior to purchasing stately '*Colne Lodge*' nearby. It is possible that Dickens and the Donnithorne's became acquainted as neighbors, he was already established as a popular author with the publication of such novels as the '*Pickwick Papers*' and '*Oliver Twist*'. Dickens wrote to friends singing the praises of Twickenham, he and his wife spent wedding anniversaries there for 20 years. He used his experiences and knowledge of the area in his novels. It is possible that the aborted marriage of the lord of the manors sister, who herself had resided at Twickenham for a period during his association with the area, was local gossip he picked up on.



Edward Donnithorne and his estate '*Colne Lodge*'.

One of Dickens many visitors at Twickenham was fellow novelist William Thackeray (1811–1863), author of '*Vanity Fair*'. During the Victorian era Thackeray was ranked only second to Dickens as the greatest writer of the age. Thackeray was born in Calcutta, India, where his father worked in the financial arm of the East India Company were James Donnithorne was Master of the Mint. The Thackeray's were also cousins of the Donnithorne's, during much of his life the great novelist corresponded with his cousin Sarah Eliza Donnithorne Shakespear, named after James Donnithorne's wife but known to the family as *Selina*. She was present at the birth of Eliza onboard '*The Rose*' as her family traveled with the Donnithorne's back to England, it's possible that Thackeray passed on the curious fate of one of his cousins out in the colonies onto Dickens whom he knew was fascinated by all things Australian. It is also possible that he introduced Dickens to his cousin Edward Donnithorne when he visited the great man of letters three doors down in 1837. Dickens and Thackeray were close friends, his death in 1863 came as a great shock to Dickens whose eulogy for his friend is very moving.

Australia, India and Twickenham all feature in '*Great Expectations*', NSW is where Pip's benefactor Abel Magwich made his fortune and India where Pip considers going after loosing his expectations of inheritance, the character Estella is sent by Miss Havisham to reside in the Twickenham area as part of her introduction to society. Which is not dissimilar to Eliza being sent to live with her brother at '*Colne Lodge*' to complete her education, before rejoining her father in Sydney. In '*Great Expectations*' Miss Havisham is jilted by a man called **Compeyson** and Eliza Emily Donnithorne was jilted by a man called **Cuthbertson**. Another similarity between the life of the real Eliza and fictional Miss Havisham to be found in the pages of the novel is the fact that both lost a mother at an early age and were subsequently spoiled by wealthy fathers, who made them principal beneficiaries of their Wills regardless of the dynastic custom which dictated eldest sons inherited all. We are unlikely to conclusively establish an ironclad link as shortly before his death Dickens destroyed vast quantities of his papers, baskets full of correspondence was burned leaving various aspects of his life an enigma. However of all the candidates proposed by literary scholars as the possible original of Miss Havisham none have as many links to the author or the story itself as Eliza Emily Donnithorne does.

The skeptic will argue that modern memory of Eliza is tainted by Dickens brainchild, however that ignores the fact that the earliest known published accounts of her life were written in living memory citing people who had first hand interactions with her. W.H.G. Freame details c1900 "the story has been told for more than fifty years"[4] and "there are persons still living in Newtown who can remember speaking to the eccentric lady under peculiar conditions".[5] That is her being hidden behind the chained front door. The advent of the motion picture industry and David Lean's 1946 classic '*Great Expectations*' with John Mills & Martita Hunt is responsible for making Miss Havisham the icon she is today, however the novel itself was not a literary phenomena in its day. According to Dickens scholar Dr. Alan Dillnot the most popular works of Dickens in Australia during the Victorian era and early 20th century when Eliza was at the height of her fame were '*The Pickwick Papers*', '*Oliver Twist*', '*David Copperfield*' and '*Nicholas Nickleby*'. So the association of her life with Dickens and '*Great Expectations*' would have been of interest but not powerful enough to redefine a living person or one still in living memory, it must be remembered that there were numerous people around the world in this time-frame who due to matrimonial misadventure lived remarkably similar lives. It was not a behavior he invented, as such it would be ludicrous to argue that his novel had anything to do with perceptions of all their lives too.

Some may argue that because her name doesn't appear in the St Stephens Banns of Marriage no intent to marry there or at all is evident, however marriage by Banns was not a prerequisite of a church wedding nor the only means of matrimony. It was a cheap public way the poor married at the time, the gentry typically doing so by the more expensive but private marriage license. This was how James Donnithorne married, also how he had arranged for his other children to wed so certainly the avenue he'd have chosen for Eliza given its discrete nature and displeasure at her choice of groom. Had a license been applied for and not executed there would be no record of it today, secular authorities never kept the pedantic records of ecclesiastics with a minds eye on eternity.

To play devils advocate one could argue that her reclusive lifestyle was born of necessity, according to her correspondence she suffered ill health, perhaps as a result of a difficult pregnancy in earlier years. Her Death Certificate notes she died of disease of 'the heart and lungs', the doctor noting she suffered from it for over 20 years. Heart and lung disease are very broad disease categories and could mean many things, her father suffered from asthma for much of his life (it was a factor in his being sent to India and likely his settling in Australia) and Eliza may well have inherited it from him. Her medical records don't exist so we have no way of knowing what precisely her illness was, whether a mountain made of a molehill to provide an excuse for withdrawing from the world or a serious affliction. Medicine in the Victorian era was crude, a far cry from the science of today and medical experts of today do not believe she suffered from what would be considered heart or lung disease today. They believe that had she either of these diseases, let alone both at the same time, she wouldn't have lived very long back then.

"Diagnosis would have been quite limited back then," said Dr. Jessica Murphy of *Harvard Medical School*. "Many diseases were simply unknown or unnamed then." According to Dr Susan Hardy of the *University of NSW*, an expert on 19th century medicine and healthcare in colonial Australia. "The 'diagnosis' could simply be giving a name to symptoms when alive or at autopsy, surviving over 20 years looks as if it wasn't actual heart failure or tuberculosis (consumption). As to treatment, it would depend on whether the doctor thought there was systemic disease present or 'nervousness' as hypochondria was often referred to in women then. If there was pain various versions of morphine could be used; bleeding was still carried out if she appeared to be 'plethoric' i.e. a bit red faced and overweight and a change of climate was often suggested for lung complaints. It may have been in middle to old age the lady suffered from variations of angina, palpitations and shortness of breath all very common in 'shut in' ladies of the 19th century so the 'cause' of death was simply descriptive." It ties in with Eliza's complaint of suffering headaches, "Headaches were very common," Dr Hardy adds, "particularly in unventilated therefore stuffy and smelly 19th century houses".

What her illness was and how it progressed we can never know, given her energetic letter writing and business activities it didn't cramp her style. However if we take the position that her condition was chronic it may explain why the house fell to ruin, bedridden or housebound for periods of time she only used one or two rooms so had no need of the others, couldn't get outside so didn't care what the house and grounds looked like either. The problem with this hypothesis is the fact that she was not alone or poor, at the time of her death she had the Bailey sisters looking after her along with a German manservant called Franz Adam Bibo. They lived on site and having only one woman to look after there was precious little for them to do, so there's no valid reason why they didn't take care of the house and grounds they shared if for no other reason then to justify their continued employment. Eliza was a high born lady, had lived in country houses, hobnobbed with the aristocracy so living in a decrepit house like that was not normal. There had to be a deeper reason, a psychological reason why she allowed her home to fall into the ruinous state it did. The independent testimony of firsthand witnesses such as Canon Taylor as to the state of the house and how she lived, as attested to by photograph and the accounts of innumerable other credible people is unassailable.

After the death of Eliza Emily Donnithorne her legend grew and journalists felt impelled to document it, they had no problem finding credible people in Newtown who had interactions with her over the years, including her former minister Canon Taylor at St Stephens and “in 1912 Mr R. Clark, the sexton of St Stephen’s, told a Sydney newspaper reporter that he lived near the Donnithorne home as a child and had occasionally glimpsed her. He said that the front door was chained and that a big mastiff would lie just inside the door. When quizzed about the star-crossed lovers aspect of her life the sexton replied, “There had been an unhappy romance, all right.” [11]

Journalist George King, an editor with *The Sydney Morning Herald* and member of the executive of the *National Trust of Australia (NSW)*, whose area of expertise was Sydney history wrote innumerable articles on the subject and gave popular lectures in the 1930’s including before the *Royal Australian Historical Society* and other groups on old Sydney. He recounted how, in his capacity of Trustee of Camperdown Cemetery, he had been approached by a retired solicitor who had as a youth clerked for a Sydney law firm and accompanied his superiors to ‘*Camperdown Lodge*’ to witness their client Eliza Emily Donnithorne sign her Last Will & Testament. He detailed the ghostly desolation within the once proud house and strange yet regal persona of its Miss Havisham like inhabitant, King obtained a copy of the Will from the Supreme Court and verified the mans story by finding his witness signature all over the document.

Although some 20th century reports state she was jilted in the years after her fathers death descendents in England have no doubt he was alive when events transpired, regardless of the distance the channels of communication were open via mail. Given Eliza’s spinster status and wealth nephews and nieces endeavored to stay in her good books in hope of inheritance. Cornish cousins settled in Australia and New Zealand during the Victorian era, they too were familiar with her life as were descendants via illegitimate branches.

Eliza’s nephew Edward George Moore Donnithorne (1842-1906), chief beneficiary of her Will and great hope of the Cornish dynasty, followed in his fathers footsteps to achieve notoriety as a soldier rising to the rank of Lt Colonel in the *Scots Greys*. During his career he saw action in the New Zealand Māori Wars, was present at the storming of the Gate Pā Fortress in 1864 where he won a medal for bravery. In 1866 under the command of Lord Strathnairn he helped put down the Fenian Insurrection in Ireland, took captured American rebel leaders Burke & Doran from Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin, to be executed for treason. He also has the dubious fame of being the inventor of the razor wire entanglement system used to horrendous effect in the Great War, his zeal for military invention, an obsession with building a machine gun, combined with bad investments bankrupted him in the 1890’s and ended forever the Donnithorne family’s ancestral wealth and privilege. A broken man he drank himself to death with Laudanum, opium in liquid form, as stately ‘*Colne Lodge*’ in Twickenham and contents were sold off to pay creditors and demolished to make way for housing. His family reduced to living in a rundown apartment above a shop, his wife Harriette who as a girl had been presented at Court and was used to servants waiting on her was reduced to taking in laundry to help support her children. When all seemed at its bleakest an unexpected second wave of inheritance flowed in from Eliza Emily Donnithorne’s Australian Estate, which enabled her to buy a house in Wimbledon and resettle the family comfortably.

The grandchildren of Eliza's brother Edward would be eternally grateful to the legendary Australian great aunt they had never met, but whose generosity reached out from beyond the grave to save them from ruin and enable them to reestablish their lives.

No one knows why George Cuthbertson left the way he did, was the prospect of spending the rest of his life being lorded over by James Donnithorne too daunting? ... was he a cad who led innocent Eliza down a garden path and swindled money out of her? ... did someone pay him off or was he forced to withdraw we will never know. He surfaces in India where he may have worked for the East India Company for a time, dying in Delhi in 1858 during the Sepoy Rebellion [PS]. Many historians and psychologists believe Eliza's suspicion that her happiness was ruined by the possessive or vindictive manipulations of her father may lay at the heart of her disengagement from the world. Although to me it seems unlikely that a social peacock obsessed with status like James Donnithorne, incensed by his daughters disobedience or not, would have humiliated them both in such a public way. It goes against his character.

There may well have been others manipulating events, although a respectable household on the surface '*Camperdown Lodge*' was a Victorian melodrama behind closed doors in the early years. James Donnithorne had a devoted manservant he brought with him from India curiously named Lemon Syrup who had a very public fight with fellow servant William Jones, then there was former soldier and convict Charles Larkman (1811-1864) who was given his Certificate of Freedom in 1842. An imposing man who knew how to use his fists and acted as Donnithorne's butler/bodyguard, accompanying him on business trips into remote corners of the colonies and was later murdered in Bathurst. Also amongst the household staff in the early years was Anne Kelly (1817-1897), it's unclear what her role was but probably a housekeeper. James also employed her husband William who ran his 12,000 acre farm at Kyneton, Victoria. No image survives of her but the twenty something bedded the sixty something former judge, a roll in the hay which resulted in an illegitimate child and her husband divorcing her. She later married Samuel Jones, brother of William Jones, and also in Donnithorne's employ. What role, if any, household staff or associated hangers on played in events is unfathomable at this point in time but there was more going on than meets the eye.

It was indeed a curious household, in 1847 Edmund Gibbes (1824-1850), son of George Nathaniel Gibbes, MLC. (1787-1873), Collector of Customs for NSW, sheltered at '*Camperdown Lodge*' with his pregnant girlfriend Frances "*Fanny*" Simmons (1830-1910) daughter of a Jewish former convict, an upstairs downstairs relationship which caused a scandal. During the months they hid from their families Fanny gave birth to a son she named George, a sickly child he was given a quick baptism at St Peters Church, Cooks River, on November 29, 1847 and died soon after at '*Camperdown Lodge*' whereupon Gibbes & Simmons had no choice but to face their angry families. Whether they hid there at the invitation of James or Eliza Emily Donnithorne is not known, however the fact that they had did not have a detrimental effect on the relationship between George Nathaniel Gibbes and James Donnithorne, they remained the closest of friends until Donnithorne's death in 1852 whereupon Gibbes attended his funeral.

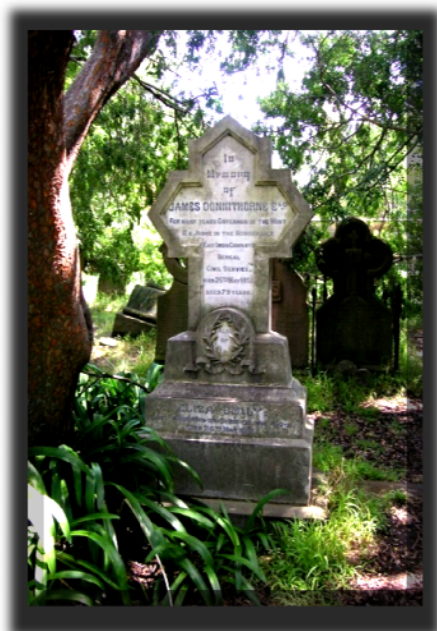
Eliza Emily Donnithorne died on May 20, 1886 aged 60 years, which was close to the average life expectancy for the time. The cause of death was heart disease, a fitting end to the life of a woman ruled by it. Her breathing problem likely a combination of asthma exacerbated by decades of living in a dusty, dank environment. She was laid to rest, two days later, beside her father in Camperdown Cemetery. "The dining-room table was cleared for the first time since it had been laid on that day when she waited - and waited in vain." [6] '*Camperdown Lodge*' was placed on the market, family portraits published here and personal effects going to relatives in the UK. "Eliza's estate, including land and houses in Sydney, Melbourne and Britain, was valued at £12,000. The Bailey sisters were left enough funds to buy a house and live comfortably the remainder of their lives. In her Will she mentions everyone and thing important to her, "she left her father's organ to her brother and her jewellery to his children, £200 each to the diocese of Sydney and the British and Foreign Bible Society, £50 to the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and 'an annuity of £5 for each of my six animals and £5 for all my birds'." [1]

"The years rolled by but the strange yet romantic legend of the pretty lady in the locked house with the uneaten wedding breakfast lived on particularly in the Newtown area and journalist began probing around Newtown" [2]. Locals who had been protective of Eliza in life continued to be so in death, at first journalist received a cold dismissive reception but as time passed they came to realize what had happened in Newtown would continue to be of an abiding social interest for generations to come and opened up. Except for the Bailey sisters who lived off a generous pension from their late mistress in a small cottage at 63 Lennox Street, Newtown, nestled in the shadow of St Stephens Church and its historic cemetery. A journalist "eventually tracked down the two servants who had served Miss Donnithorne for much of her life time. They were now very old." [2] "Both ladies were at home, but only one came to the door in response to the ring of the bell - a short, stout, pleasant faced woman." [4] "One seemed willing to talk when the other sharply stopped her, saying: *"Remember, we know nothing. Our lips are sealed to everyone and every thing."* After that the old woman had nothing more to say [2].

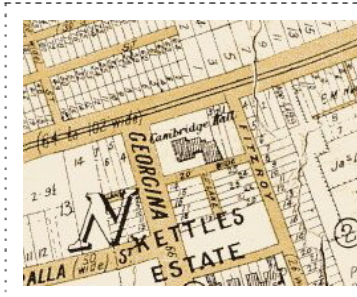
"Miss Donnithorne possessed a truly kind heart, the great troubles which darkened her life and wrecked her hopes could not sour the natural sweetness of her disposition." [4] In that respect she was the diametric opposite of Dickens bitter Miss Havisham, who waged a bitter war against mankind amid the desolation of her existence. Eliza was long remembered by the people of Sydney for her discrete acts of kindness, people in need some times seen lining up outside '*Camperdown Lodge*' to seek assistance. "Possessed of ample means she gave freely to all comers, and was never known to turn a deaf ear to the cry of distress. The Sydney mendicants (beggars), organ men and professional loafers all knew Miss Donnithorne and frequently her garden would be half full of these applicants for her bounty." [4] She would listen to their stories hidden invisibly behind a partly open, chained door and if moved by their plight a long, lace clad arm would appear and long slim fingers deposit a gold sovereign in their hand, no one was ever turned away empty handed. For many years after she had been laid to rest those whose lives had been improved by her benevolence placed flowers on her grave in thanks.

Today she is fondly remembered by a new generation. In November 2004 “the headstone of Eliza Emily Donnithorne in Newtown's historic cemetery was hit by vandals during a drunken binge.”[12] “The National Trust appealed for help to restore it”[13] and people from all walks of life around the world mobilized to help. Groups ranging from the local Goths to the Dickens Society raised funds, British composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and writer Randolph Stow contributing a substantial sum. “Miller College students stepped in and used their stonemasonry skills to restore the headstone, supported in a joint TAFE–Industry initiative by a grant from the Dickens Society.” [13] Stonemasons and crane hire companies likewise donated their time and resources to help restore the large Italian white marble cross headstone to its former glory. “On March 3, 2008 the Dickens Society visited the grave,”[14] to pay homage to a woman many believe inspired the creation of Miss Havisham.

Dickens aside the life of Eliza Emily Donnithorne has inspired artists around the world, including an opera by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies called “*Miss Donnithorne's Maggot*”, (Maggot an old English term meaning ‘an extravagant notion or whim’) in 1974 described by the libretto’s author Randolph Stow as “a base and cowardly slur on the reputation of an unfortunate lady”. Her life also forms a basis of Libby Gleeson’s 1987 award winning novel ‘*I am Susannah*’ published by Angus & Robertson and ‘*The Ballad of Eliza Emily Donnithorne*’ by folksinger John Armstrong. It even inspired a line of clothing with Sydney fashion house ‘*Gallery Serpentine*’. It wasn’t the first time in the family’s ancient history that an ill-fated romance caught the worlds attention, the 1859 novel ‘*Adam Bede*’ by George Eliot (1819–1880) which follows the doomed romance of young squire Arthur Donnithorne and common farm girl Hetty Sorrel is believed to have been in part inspired by a scandal that befell another branch of the Donnithorne family in Cornwall during the 18th century.



The Final Resting Place of James & Eliza Emily Donnithorne



The sub division of *Camperdown Lodge* (left). After Eliza died the property was renamed *Cambridge Hall* and used as a private school known as the '*Newtown Unsectarian Academy*'. Note the size of the house, the shaded building is larger than nearby conventional blocks of land. The area today (right), an apartment block occupies the site, although the street layout is essentially the same.



At the time of her death Eliza wouldn't have been able to imagine how profoundly the world outside had changed. Had she listened carefully she'd have heard newfangled electric omnibuses humming up and down the street heralding the dawn of a new age. Newtown was no longer a sleepy hamlet but a built-up, light industrial suburb connected to the city by rail. The green fields, orchards and estates of her fathers peers were long gone, swallowed up by narrow winding streets and cottages, some of the first in Australia to be connected to electricity and telephone. Sydney was no longer a trading port but a major metropolis, Australia no longer a patchwork of developing colonies but a young nation moving confidently towards independence from Britain. Like the era it represented '*Camperdown Lodge*' has long since vanished, after Eliza's death it was turned into a private school the master of which changed its name to '*Cambridge Hall*'. Later businessman "Samuel Hordern purchased the property and demolished the house"^[7] in 1907 as part of a redevelopment, today an apartment block and restaurant occupies the site but its disappearance and passage of time have done little to diminish its memory.

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- **Royal Historical Society of Victoria**

James Donnithorne's original legal papers from his Chancery Suit with William Ward, a battle over St Agnes Station, are in the possession of the RHSV. They are frail, need to be viewed in person. They also have the original books for St Agnes Station, also frail, never been copied.

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- **Society of Australian Genealogists.**

The Society of Australian Genealogists possesses a great deal of genealogical and general information on the Donnithorne family, resources used herein, collection numbers as follows: 4/13183 - 4/14228 - 4/14280 - 4/23505 - 5/4784 - 6/1031- 02\000146

- **India Office Records, The British Library. London. UK.**

Record Call Numbers: **IO1:** N/1/9 f.196 - **IO2:** J/1/14 f.261 - **IO3:** N/1/7 f.331

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