

WILLIAM DINSDALE Snr

Bootmaker William Dinsdale Snr was transported to Australia for the theft of post office letters in 1857 and arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1858.¹

He was granted a ticket-of-leave in York on 30 April 1860, indicating he was living and working in York at that time, possibly working for bootmaker Joseph Pyke who had established his trade in York c1857.²

By May 1863, William Dinsdale Snr was advertising his own business in the local press and the location of his premises was noted as being 'late in the occupation of Mr Henry Beard (near the Post Office) where he intends for the future carrying on his business on a more extended scale'.³ This was in a building which was demolished for the Motor Museum in 1907.

William Dinsdale Snr's family, consisting of his wife and six children, voyaged to Australia in 1863 as assisted immigrants, five years after he had been transported to the Colony.⁴ They were on board the *Tartar*, the same ship as the Rev Edward and Janet Millett voyaged on. Janet Millett must be describing Mrs Mary Dinsdale in her book *An Australian Parsonage*⁵ when she said:

We had with us also a family of children from Yorkshire, whose mother, whenever it was a windy night, laid all the blame of it upon her husband for ever having sent to bring her out. On these occasions she would moan out, "O my bairns! my honeys! I will never forgive thy father for sending for us!" She used to say that he had gone out some years before as a shoemaker, and had now sent money for his family to follow him. She omitted, however, to add that his own expenses to Australia had been defrayed by Government.⁶

And some days after arrival, Janet Millett notes:

"We learned that our Yorkshire friend had been joined on landing by a very decent looking man who was doing well as a shoemaker, and who seemed, though a convict, to be respected as a man of business. He had prepared a very comfortable home for his wife and children, and it seemed probable that they might all prosper, could she make up her mind to do her best in a scene so totally new to her. This

¹ Erickson, Rica [comp] *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australia pre 1829-1888, Vol II*, p. 840.

² Pyke advertised in February 1878 that he had been in "residence in York (for) a period of over 21 years":*Eastern Districts Chronicle*, 16 February 1878, p.2.

³ *The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 22 May 1863, p. 1.

⁴ Erickson, Rica [comp] *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australia pre 1829-1888, Vol II*, p. 840.

⁵ Page 9.

⁶ Page 9.

family seemed the only one among the 'married people' class of immigrants that had much prospect of a good start in their new country."⁷

The shoe and boot making business seems to have been successful as William Dinsdale Snr regularly advertised for new staff and two of his sons, William Jnr and Henry, worked with their father. In 1863, William Dinsdale Snr was described as a farmer and shoemaker⁸.

It is possible the Dinsdale family lived on site alongside the workshop but they may have lived on a small farming property of 40 acres which Dinsdale purchased in 1868 and named 'Spring Hill'.⁹ On the death of William Dinsdale Senior in 1878, William Jnr took over the family business.¹⁰

Rob Garton Smith
President
The York Society (Inc)
February 2022

⁷ Pages 32 and 33.

⁸ Colony of Western Australia Coroner's Court at York, 22 September 1863, ACC 1086/30, Public Records Office.

⁹ Erickson, Rica [comp] *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australia pre 1829-1888, Vol II*, p. 840.

¹⁰ *The Eastern Districts Chronicle*, 17 March 1888, p. 6.