

THE MAN WHO WALKED WITH HIS EYES DOWN

HASS, Science

Who was James Drummond, and what work did he do?

Students will:

- Examine primary historical sources to find information about the past.
- Consider the achievements and significance of an early colonial settler.

ENGAGE

Show students a [Google Maps street view photo of Drummond St road sign](#).

- Where is this photo taken?
- What is the name of the road to the left of the photo?
- How do we decide what roads should be called?



EXPLORE

Let students examine a selection of sources about James Drummond and make a class list of at least five things these sources tell us about him (eg. what he looked like, where he lived, his family, what he did for a living, why he might have been considered important etc).



Shortly after the departure of the last mail occurred the death of Mr. James Drummond, the well-known botanist, who we regret to report died on the 27th March, after a short illness. Mr. Drummond's botanical researches in this colony gained him an European reputation; his scientific knowledge and his untiring devotion to the object of his pursuits, enabled him to add largely to the known vegetable kingdom. His long and valuable services in this respect were acknowledged in 1846, by a grant from Her Majesty of £200-



EXPLAIN

- James Drummond was among the [first European settlers to come to the Swan River Colony](#), and among the first Europeans to explore and settle in the Avon Valley.
- He was an avid botanist and a plant collector. He described and 'named' (ie. gave scientific Latin names to plants which were already well known by Aboriginal people) to hundreds of WA plants. Drummond often travelled with Aboriginal guides to help him find specimens. Some Aboriginal people were said to describe him as 'the old white man with white hair who walked with his eyes down'.
- One of his major contributions to the development of Toodyay as an agricultural area was the [identification of a species of native plants, which were fatal to European animals such as sheep and cattle if eaten](#). Early farmers had to clear land of these plants before animals could graze there. He also set up the first flour mill in the area.
- Some remnants of his work can still be seen today at [the Government House and Supreme Court gardens in Perth](#); for example, the old oak trees in the area which were planted when he worked as the appointed Government Naturalist to the Swan River Colony.

EXTEND

Read through the [Australian Dictionary of Biography entry about James Drummond](#), and get students to add to the class list of information about him.

Show students a photo of Drummond's grave, discuss what an 'epitaph' is, and get them to suggest what might make a good epitaph for him.

(The actual wording on Drummond's grave – what remains legible – is “*Sacred to the memory of James Drummond... Sarah*”. ‘Sarah’ was the name of Drummond's wife.)



EVALUATE AND REFLECT

- What do you think Drummond would have been most proud of in his life?
- Drummond contributed significantly to scientific knowledge, but he did so with the help of Aboriginal guides. One way his contribution is recognised is that some plants are named after him. What might be a good way to recognise the role of his Aboriginal assistants, many of whose names are unknown today?

WANT TO DO MORE?

- Have a go at [collecting, describing and preserving your own plant specimens](#).



Drummond and his grandson James Mackintosh
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2000.57



Framed plant type specimen collected by James Drummond
Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001.490



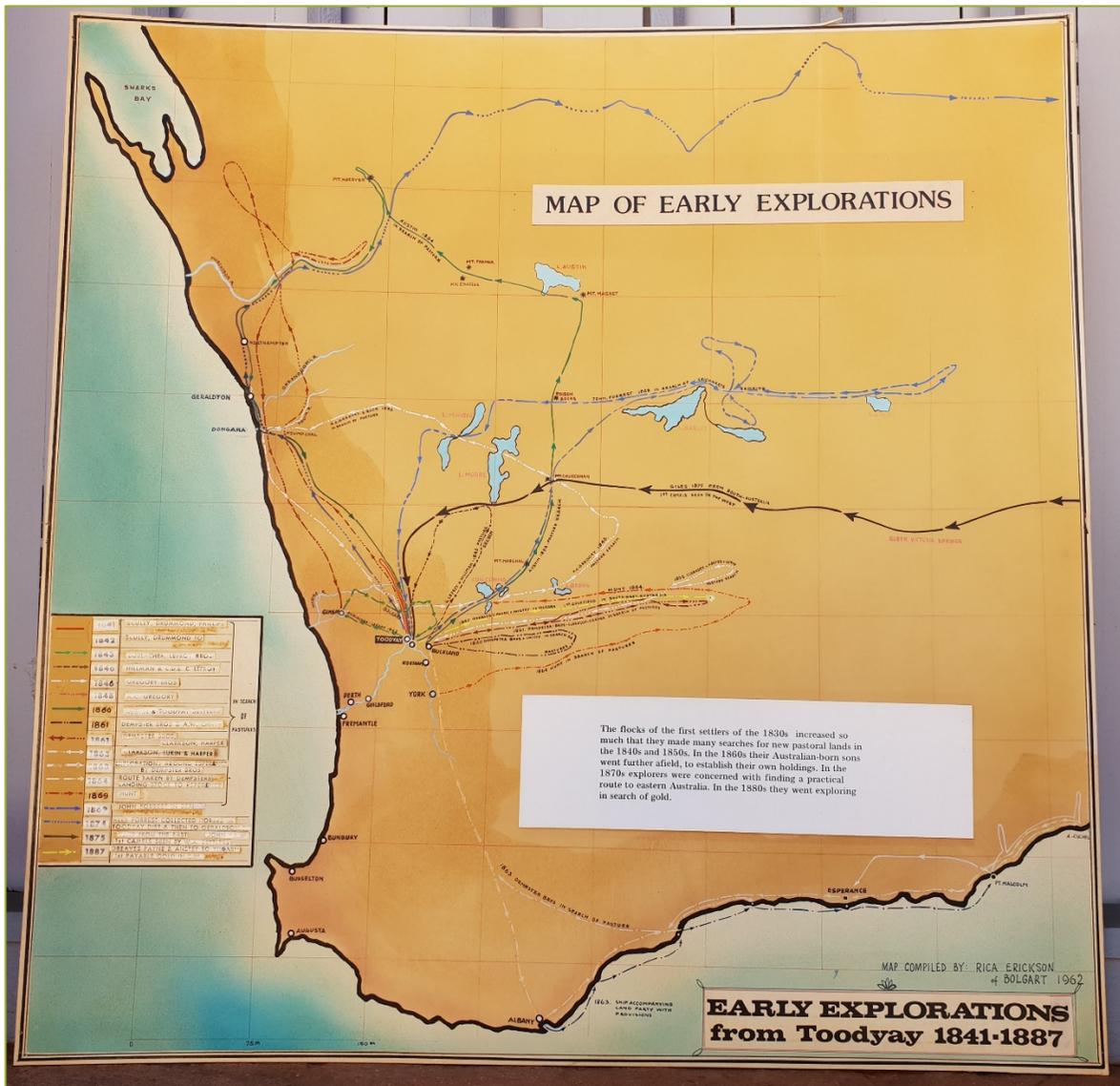
Old Drummond's Mill in Toodyay (demolished in 1924).

Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001.1289

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A newspaper article, published soon after John Drummond's death.

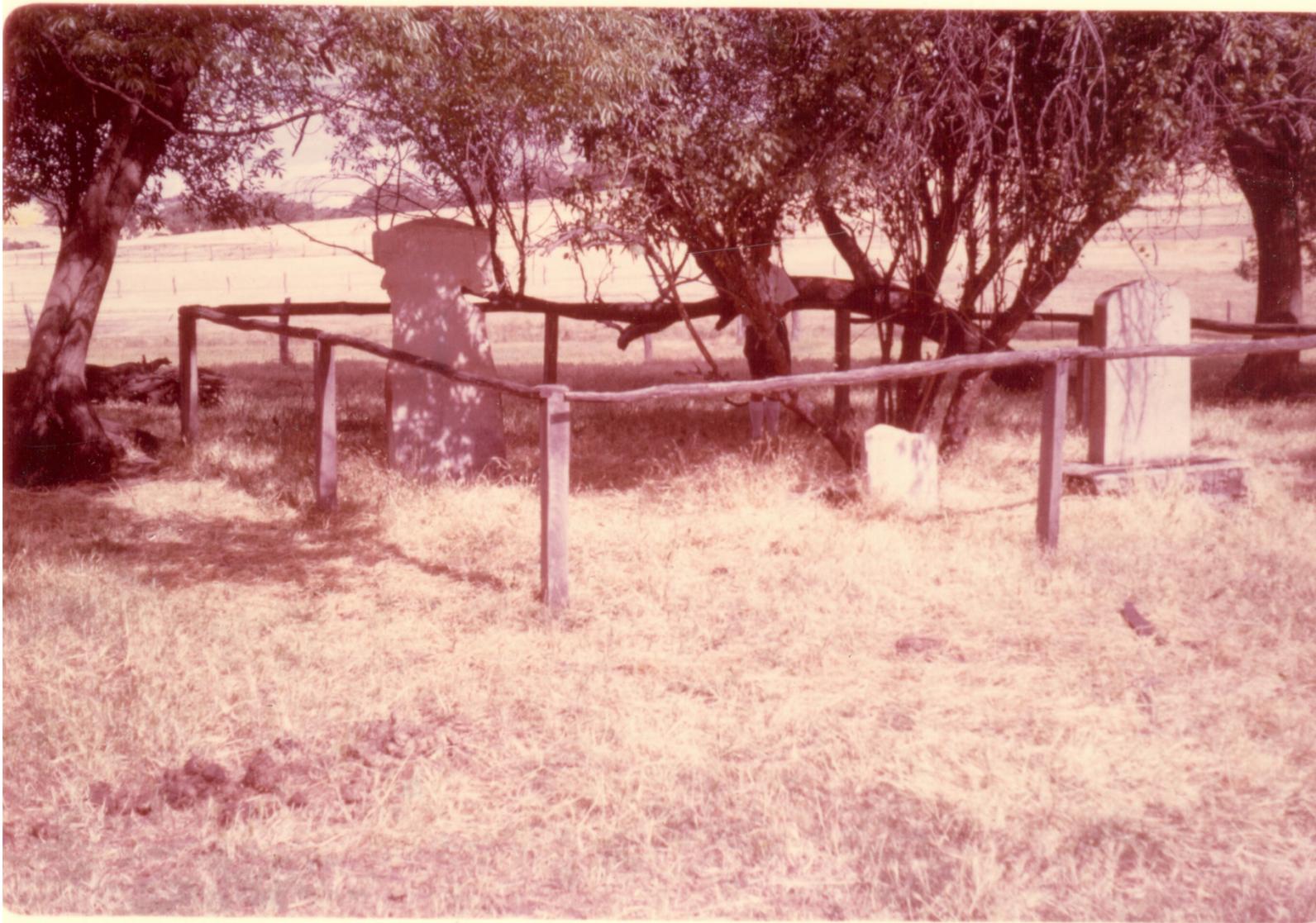
National Library of Australia <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2934390>



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|--|-------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | 1841 | SCULLY, DRUMMOND, PHILLIPS | } IN SEARCH OF PASTURES |
| | 1842 | SCULLY, DRUMMOND TO | |
| | 1843 | DURLACHER, LEFROY BROS | |
| | 1846 | HILLMAN & C.D.E. C. LEFROY | |
| | 1846 | GREGORY BROS | |
| | 1848 | A.C. GREGORY | |
| | 1860 | AUSTIN & TOODYAY SETTLERS | |
| | 1861 | DEMPSTER BROS & A.W. CHITTY | |
| | 1861 | DEMPSTER BROS, CLARKSON, HARPER | |
| | 1863 | CLARKSON, LUKIN & HARPER | |
| | 1863 | EXPLORATIONS AROUND ESPERANCE BY DEMPSTER BROS | |
| | 1864 | ROUTE TAKEN BY DEMPSTERS LANDING STOCK TO ESPERANCE | |
| | 1869 | HUNT | |
| | 1869 | JOHN FORREST IN SEA | |
| | 1874 | ALEX FORREST COLLECTED HORSES IN TOODYAY DIST & THEN TO GERALDTON TO | |
| | 1875 | GILES FROM THE EAST JOHN F.E.W. 1st CAMELS SEEN BY W.A. SETTLERS | |
| | 1887 | GREAVES PAYNE & ANSTEY TO YILGARN 1st PAYABLE GOLD IN S.W. | |

A hand drawn explorer's map (with labels added over time) showing the routes of early explorers including James Drummond.

Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2012.58



Drummond's grave at his Toodyay property, *Hawthornden*.

Shire of Toodyay local history collection 2001.1273