

Bendigo Cemetery



This is a grave for John Thomas SANDERS with two headstones facing each other. Neither headstone names George Edward THOMSON, the second of only two people buried in this grave.

Images:

SANDERS_E4_139.JPG
SANDERS_E4_139A.JPG
SANDERS_E4_139B.JPG
SANDERS_E4_139C.JPG
SANDERS_E4_139D.JPG

There are two headstones (facing each other) on the same grave.

A brief history of John Thomas SANDERS

1st Deputy Registrar of Births & Deaths on the Bendigo Diggings. He died 22/4/1875 aged 68 years.

There is no old resident of Bendigo who will not remember the portly gentlemen, who in white waistcoat and generally smiling face used to sit under Mr MacLaclan (Bendigo Mac) and with him dispensed justice to the public for so many years.

Mr John Thomas Sanders was a quiet reserved gentleman, who from the time of his arrival in the district in 1852 made a great many friends and commanded respect from all classes of the community.

Commencing his duties here in 1852 Mr Sanders did not relinquish his position until about 6

or 7 years ago when he went into business as a solicitor and in January this year took Mr Thompson in as a partner.

A brief history of George Edward Thomson (1826-1889), miners' leader.

George was born on 3rd October 1826 at Coupar Angus, Perthshire, Scotland, son of Charles Pratt Thomson and his wife Jane, nee Oliphant, of Gask near Perth.

The family normally lived at Croydon, Surrey, England, where his father owned considerable property. Thomson was educated at Sutton Valence near Maidstone and at a grammar school at Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. At 16 he entered a lawyer's office in London and later began and abandoned medical studies.

He took part in the anti-corn law and Chartist movements and knew many of the leaders and Thomas Carlyle. He became an Owenite socialist and remained faithful throughout his life. An active member of the British Association, he worked with the Mayhews in gathering material about the London poor and was prominent in movements for taxation and patent law reform.

In 1848 he presided at a meeting in the City of London which protested against legislation suppressing the right of public discussion.

Thomson developed symptoms of familial tuberculosis in 1852 and decided to migrate. Arriving in Melbourne on 19 November in the *Blorengo*, he made for the Forest Creek (Castlemaine) goldfield where he had some success, in April 1853 he went to Sandhurst (Bendigo).

Prominent in the formation of the Anti-Gold-Licence Association on 6 June, at a meeting next month he presented the petition for licence fee reduction, reform of the police, land reform and enfranchisement of the diggers; he went the rounds of the diggings and took the petition to Melbourne. When La Trobe rejected the petition Thomson rallied support at meetings in Melbourne and Geelong.

At Bendigo on 13 August a huge meeting adopted his recommendation of passive resistance; it was agreed to tender only 10s instead of 30s for the next month's licence, and the red ribbon became the movement's insignia.

On 28 August Thomson and others tendered 10s to Commissioner Panton and Chief Commissioner Wright who rejected the offer and a 'courteous discussion' followed: the licence fee was soon reduced by more than one half. Thomson gave evidence to the select committee of inquiry and to the royal commission on Eureka.

In 1888 he analysed the movement in his 'Leaves from the Diary of an old Bendigonian' in Leavitt and Lilburn's *Jubilee History of Victoria and Melbourne*, and revealed that an attack by troops would have been resisted. Acknowledged as the chief leader of the most efficient and popular of the diggers' movements, he had consistently advocated 'moral force' with 'physical force' only as a last resort.

Late in 1853 Thomson, with J. H. Abbott, founded and edited the *Diggers Advocate*;

Ebenezer Syme was a prominent contributor, but it soon failed. He agitated about 1856 for agricultural settlement in the Loddon Valley, and in 1857 represented Bendigo at the Land Convention, where his land nationalization objective had little backing and he was persuaded to support Wilson Gray.

He prospected in the Grampians, but soon organized the registration of miners as voters in the Pleasant Creek and Ararat areas. In Maldon about 1859 he was active in the movement for local government and refused to stand for the Legislative Assembly.

Moving to Castlemaine he again took up law and formed a partnership with F E Paynter; he opened a branch at Daylesford where he was a borough councillor. In 1862 in evidence to the royal commission on the goldfields he advocated a general code of mining by-laws for the colony.

Thomson returned to Bendigo in 1875 to partner J T Saunders. He was 'Sandhurst's ripest scholar', with a phenomenal memory and learned in literature, history and science, especially geology, electricity, navigation and astronomy.

He wrote often for the press, sometimes as 'Nemesis'. His socialist beliefs kept him out of colonial politics. He collapsed in his office after an overdose of chlorodyne, died in his home, Hustlers Terrace, on 17 January 1889, and was buried in Sandhurst cemetery with Anglican rites.

He was survived by his wife Rosalind, nee Harper, whom he had married at Daylesford on 30 May 1863, and by two sons and three daughters. He left debts amounting to £579.

Mr George Edward Thomson had come to Bendigo in 1853, just before the agitations on the gold-field had reached a height. The movement in 1853 is well described in an article by Mr Thomson himself, entitled "Leaves from the Diary of an Old Bendigionian."

Mr Thomson spoke with authority, for he was the leader of this movement on Bendigo in 1853. He was a fluent and powerful speaker, and possessed the tact and foresight so necessary in a trusted general. We have already had occasion in earlier chapters to refer to Mr Thomson's connection with the anti-licensing movement, and it is not necessary to enter into details here.

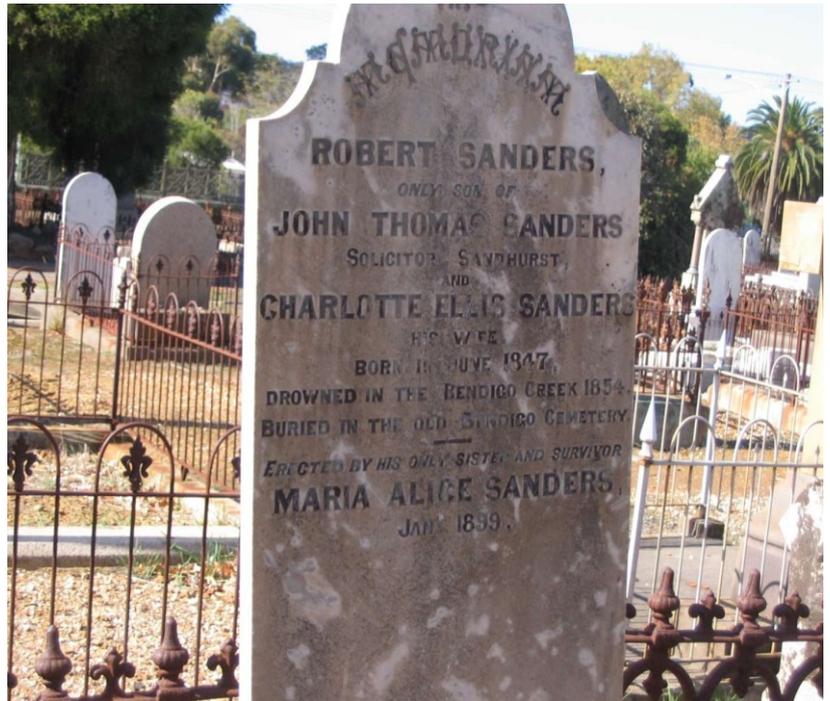
Mr Thomson was absent from Bendigo during the movement for the total abolition of the license tax, which culminated in the Eureka Stockade riots. His name does not figure prominently in subsequent movements until the land question came into prominence in 1857.

In July of that year he and Mr Benson were appointed the Bendigo delegates to the Land Convention held in Melbourne. Mr Thomson had always held liberal views on the land question, and some years before he had been successful in his efforts to convert into agricultural lands for the people, the pastoral, land monopolised in the squatting interest by Mr Hector Norman Simpson.

After periods of residence in Stawell and Castlemaine, he returned to Bendigo in 1875, and became a partner of Mr J T Saunders, the solicitor. Upon the death of the latter, he assumed solo control of the business, which he held till his death.

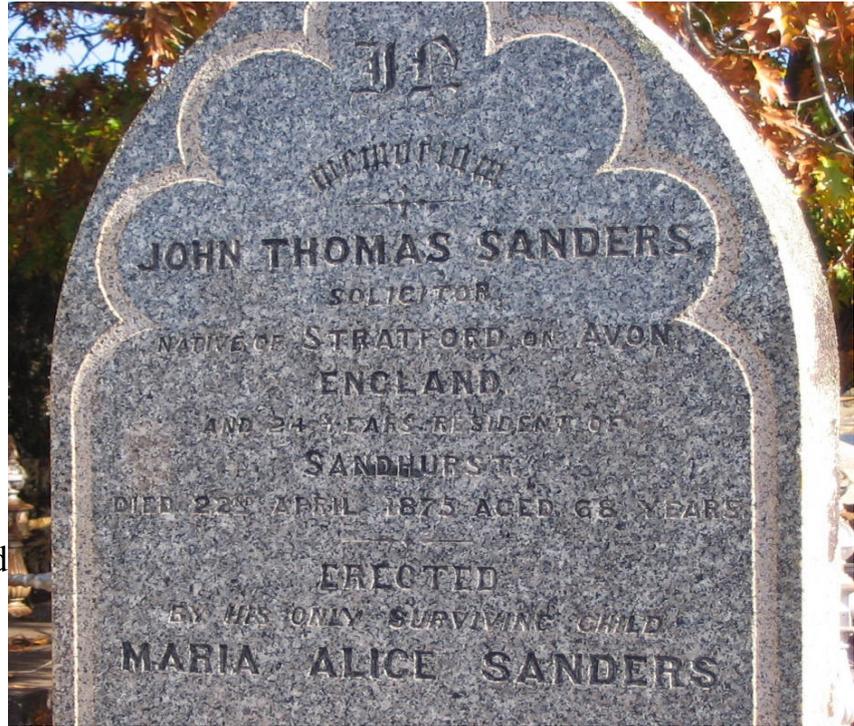
Notes from Bev Hanson and Jodi Fuller (16/08/2016).

In Memoriam
JOHN SANDERS,
only son of
JOHN THOMAS SANDERS
Solicitor Sandhurst
and
CHARLOTTE ELLIS
SANDERS
his wife
Born in June 1847
drowned in the Bendigo Creek
1854
buried in the Old Bendigo
Cemetery
Erected by his only sister and
survivor
MARIA ALICE SANDERS
January 1899



In Memoriam
JOHN THOMAS
SANDERS
Solicitor
Native of Stratford on
Avon
ENGLAND
and 24 years Resident of
SANDHURST
Died 22nd April 1875
Aged 68 years

Erected
By his only surviving Child
MARIA ALICE
SANDERS



*Note: George Edward THOMSON is not named on either headstone.
The story of who erected the headstones and when, many years later, may be the
reason for his name to be omitted.*

Only the following two people were buried in this grave #5624 Sect E4 as per cemetery records.

5624 John Thomas SANDERS d- 22/04/1875 b- 24/04/1875 68 yrs ****

10928 George Edward THOMSON d- 17/01/1889 b- 18/01/1889 63 yrs ****

Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Fri 18 Jan 1889 Page 2

Inquest into the death of Mr Geo E Thomson

An inquiry was also held by Mr J C Stamp JP, into the cause of the death of Geo E Thomson, particulars of which appear elsewhere. The evidence of the wife and son of deceased, and of Dr Atkinson, was taken, from which it appeared that deceased was in the habit of taking chlorodyne, and the cause of death was an overdose of that medicine.

A verdict to that effect was recorded.

and

A very respectful eulogy for George Edward THOMSON

THE BENDIGO ADVERTISER

SANDHURST, FRIDAY, JAN. 18, 1889

DEATH OF MR G E THOMSON.

WE have to mourn the loss of another old fellow-citizen and friend, the transition of whom to that life "whose portal" as Longfellow says, "we call death," took place yesterday morning. Mr George Edward Thomson was one of the oldest Bendigonians who had been spared for nearly forty years to speak from personal experience of the now almost forgotten scenes of the early digging days. As an

historical authority on the strange and exciting incidents of those times the deceased gentleman had no peer, his memory having been wonderfully retentive.

As a prominent actor in the agitation which had for its object the attainment of the privileges of a free British community, for the denizens of the goldfields chiefly, and for the colonists generally, he could speak with unerring precision, both as to facts and dates, of the eventful story of the struggle which culminated in the famous Eureka tragedy. No man who engaged in the goldfields contest with the ruling powers exerted himself with more energy or greater judgement than Mr Thomson, and we may safely say that it was in a very great measure due to his judicious action that no outbreak of a violent character took place on Bendigo, and we may also observe that if all the leaders of the incensed diggers had acted with the coolness and prudence displayed by him, the sad scene of bloodshed at Ballarat would certainly have been spared.

Rightful concessions only were sought; there was no demand for anything more than the fair and equitable rights of British subjects; and Mr Thomson was one of those who was convinced the ends desired could be attained by a persistent adherence to a legitimate course.

The agitators were most undeservedly stigmatised as rebels; but if it were possible for such a state of things to prevail in these days, there would not be one in the colony worthy the name of man who would not be such a rebel as were those with whom Mr Thomson was associated and for whom he was acting in the capacity of a leading spirit. Their demand simply was that they should be governed in a constitutionally British manner.

The views of the goldfields' population were forced on the attention of the Government by our departed friend in a manly, temperate manner, both with his voice and pen, and any show of turbulence was at the same time strongly deprecated by him. Displaying great tact in council and immense vigour on the platform, he commanded at once the respect of his colleagues and the confidence of the masses.

No word that could be called revolutionary escaped his lips, and when other speakers trenched on anything like seditious ground, they met with swift correction at his hands. As an orator he was in his prime at that period, and not only could his clear and resonant voice make itself heard, so that no syllable of his utterances was lost, upon vast assemblages of men, but his arguments were so conclusive and convincing, and his language so incisive, that he never failed to impress his hearers with the correctness of his views; and none but those who were prejudiced in favour of the Government failed to acknowledge the righteousness of the cause he advocated.

His calm and firm temperament, his sincere earnestness and great ability, rendered him a pillar of strength and enforced the admission that he was verily "a man of the people." In his death one of the last remaining links binding the present with the past of the goldfields has been destroyed. It is to Mr Thomson and some other men like him that we are indebted for the initiation of constitutional Government, and the establishment of the free institutions which we now enjoy.

We do not claim for him that he accomplished single-handed the liberation of the people of this country from harsh and arbitrary rule, but it is unquestionable that his influence went a long way towards the attainment of the objects of the agitation in which he took so conspicuous and vigorous a part.

It has often been regretted that he never entered Parliament, for his just and well balanced mind, his eloquence and judgement would have rendered him a most valuable representative, whilst his talent fitted him for high office in the State. He has always commanded the esteem and respect of his fellow citizens, many of whom will deplore his sudden and unexpected end. But he seems to have passed away quietly and peacefully, even as one weary of lengthened labor lapses into the rest of sleep.

For some years his friends have noticed with sympathy and sorrow the evident failing of his physical strength; but his mind retained its power and vigour to the last, and he died as he had lived a clear-sighted and able man.

Although never given to making a wide acquaintance or to the seeking after popularity, he had many friends and enjoyed the good opinion and respectful feeling of all who knew him. As one who did the State some service in his time, and that of an invaluable kind, he is deserving of the lasting regard not of the people of Sandhurst only but of the whole colony.

The race with which' he was contemporaneous in the days when an extraordinary condition of things called his genius into active exertion is fast becoming liable, through the effects, of declining years, to arrest at the hands of the "fell sergeant, Death" (*from HAMLET - Hamlet forces Claudius to drink poison*) and cannot expect very much longer to elude his apprehending grasp. They will feel this fresh gap in their ranks, and will stand with truly sympathising feelings at his grave; but the race that is succeeding them owe a deep tribute of gratitude to the really noble and patriotic mind which has at length escaped from its mortal bonds, and we would ask, in remembrance and recognition of its earthly work, that the honour which was justly its due should be awarded by the community generally, and that the name of George Edward Thomson should be held by them in kindly and grateful estimation.

Biographical notes

John Thomas SANDERS (1807 – 1875)

1853 First Deputy Registrar in Bendigo

During 1853 John Thomas Sanders was appointed first Deputy Registrar in Bendigo Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages as BDM registration became compulsory by law on 1 July 1853.

ROBERT SANDERS:

At the Back Creek Cemetery there is a tombstone for Robert Sanders, the 7 year old son of the first Deputy Registrar of Births and Deaths for Sandhurst, who drowned in the Bendigo Creek in 1854, but for some reason he was never officially registered. The inscription on the Monument says '**buried in the old Bendigo Cemetery**', it does not say re-interred at Back Creek Cemetery. The monument was erected in January 1899, (45 years later) by young Robert's sister, who was at that time was the only surviving child of Thomas Sanders, her other brother died in 1887.

At the same time she had a tombstone erected to her father who was buried at Back Creek Cemetery in 1875. Both stones are enclosed inside a fence which suggests a family plot being bought in 1875. The monumental mason, Peter Finn, who made Robert's Tombstone was in Bendigo from at least the middle 1860's to the early 1900's.

Source: Where They Lie - Early Burials on the Bendigo Goldfields 1852-1870

SANDERS - In loving memory of my dear father,
John Thomas Sanders (solicitor), born at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwick, England,
died at Wattle Street, Sandhurst, Victoria, 22nd April, 1875; also my only brother,
Robert Sanders, drowned in Bendigo Creek, 1854. So long gone, so well
remembered.

(Inserted by his only daughter and survivor, Maria Alice Sanders, Melbourne
Road, Williamstown)

Source: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/10672162>

Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Mon 26 Apr 1875 Page 2

Funeral of the late Mr Sanders.

The remains of the late Mr Sanders were interred on Saturday afternoon in the White Hills Cemetery (error Bendigo Cemetery). At the request of the deceased the cortege was of a very quiet nature, only his personal friends and the members of his profession who could attend, being present. The Rev Amos Brazier read the burial service of the Church of England.

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PASSED AWAY.

In former issues we have recorded the deaths of two gentlemen who have for many years been connected with the legal profession in Sandhurst. The late Mr Sanders was buried on Saturday, and yesterday the funeral of Mr. Montgomery took place. During the sitting of the Insolvency Court, Mr Rymer made an application to His Honor Judge Dunne for an adjournment of the court in order to afford the members of the profession engaged in court an opportunity of paying their last tribute of respect to Mr Montgomery. His Honor said, in reply, that he would gladly do all in his power to afford this opportunity, but regretted that the application had not been made earlier, in which case he would have adjourned the court. But having already fixed the hearing of a case (re J C Hadley) for two o'clock, he must proceed with it, but the gentlemen engaged in other cases, he said, could attend the funeral if they chose, as he would not take any other case that day.

He referred to the death of Mr Sanders, who, he said, had been an old resident of this district, and who enjoyed not only the esteem and respect of his professional brethren, but also of the entire community. So far as the jurisdiction over which he (the judge) presided was concerned, he had only to remark that he entirely endorsed this feeling shared so generally. With regard to Mr Montgomery, his remarks also applied, and he need therefore not repeat them. Those gentlemen had commanded his respect, and he regretted their death, and at the same time he wished to give expression to the sympathy which he felt for the members of the deceased gentlemen's families, who had been visited with such affliction.



Compiled by Pat & Ian Belmont
in January 2017

for the Bendigo Cemetery Obituaries & Notes