

Eddington's Cottage, Bagdad

John Eddington

John Eddington was one of the many convicts and settlers removed from Norfolk Island at the beginning of the 19th century. According to Eddington, he was born free and:

"...arrived with other relations in this colony in 1811 from Norfolk Island under a Compact or understanding from the British Government that all Settlers who should immigrate from that Settlement to VDL were to receive double the amount of Land relinquished, but this regulation did not prevent such Settlers from obtaining larger Grants in proportion to their means"¹

Eddington bought with him stock and cash "of not less than six thousand pounds" as well as his "aged mother". He applied for a land grant and in September 1813 was duly granted 38 acres at Bagdad, the original grant on which Eddington's cottage is located². In 1821 he married Elizabeth Cameron (also free) in Hobart Town.³

By 1836 Eddington was quite prosperous, with a farm at Sandy Bay, a house in Elizabeth Street, a "considerable quantity" of horses, cattle and sheep, and 11,000 'dollars' (probably Spanish dollars) in real and personal property. He was a constant presence at the New Town Races, serving for many years as Steward as well as racing his own horses. There is no indication however that Eddington had a close association with the Bagdad grant at this time. Both the 1842 and 1848 Census show Eddington living at 10 Elizabeth Street in Hobart⁴.

John Eddington died in Hobart in July 1869 aged 78⁵.

The Eddingtons at Bagdad

In June 1824 John Eddington purchased the adjoining Bagdad grant from the original locatee, John Piper⁶. In February 1826, two years after the purchase of the Piper grant, Eddington gave his neighbour John Espie "permission....to graze my cattle and sheep on his farm"⁷. From then there is a gap in the record until the Electoral Roll of April 1856, when John Thomas Eddington appears as the owner of "freehold land" at Bagdad⁸, as well as a house rented to William Davidson (the cottage opposite Sunnyside – note that the now 80 acre Sunnyside grant was bisected by the highway).

¹ TA CSO 1/1/880/18640

² *Hobart Town Gazette* 23 May 1829 p2

³ TA RGD 36/1/1 Number 492

⁴ TA CSO 1/1/880/18640CEN1/1/10 and CEN1/1/83

⁵ TA RGD 35/1/7 Number 7951

⁶ Due to the early date of this transaction there is no Memorial of the indenture of sale. However it is referred to in a much later transaction relating to the cottage opposite 'Sunnyside', which was built on part of the Piper grant. The description refers to the Piper grant being assigned by the said John Piper to John Eddington by a Deed of Assignment dated 24th day of June 1824" – DPIPWE Mem 63/4365

⁷ *Hobart Town Gazette* 4 February 1826 p3

⁸ *The Courier* 11 April 1846 p3

When John Eddington died in 1869 he left the Sandy Bay farm to his widow for the term of her natural life, and thence to his son John Thomas Eddington. The 'farm at Bagdad' (Sunnyside) was bequeathed directly to John Thomas Eddington free of any encumbrances⁹.



Figure 1: Sunnyside (date unknown) per Ancestry.com

⁹ TA AD960/1/8 Will Number 1356



Figure 2: John Thomas Eddington per Ancestry.com

John Thomas Eddington was the eldest son, born in Hobart in 1832¹⁰ and married to a Jane Cavell¹¹ in Bagdad in 1862¹². He was a leading light in the Bagdad Community, and in later life served on the Brighton Council (of which Bagdad was then a part). Eddington was one of three founding members of the Bagdad Reading Club¹³, established in 1882 to provide a library for the district as well as lectures and social events, similar in function to a Mechanics Institute. He was instrumental in raising money to build

¹⁰ TA RGD 32/1/2 Number 5292

¹¹ Also known as Jane Kavell, Jane Cavill, etc

¹² Accessed via Ancestry.com 2 February 2026: [John Thomas Eddington](#)

¹³ *The Mercury* 31 March 1883 p3

the Bagdad Hall on land purchased from Elizabeth Galletly¹⁴, and later in the additions to the Hall and establishment of the Recreation Ground¹⁵.

John Thomas and Jane Eddington had a son, Thomas Eddington, in February 1861, followed by William Henry in June 1862; Emily in August 1864 and Ernest Albert in May 1868. All of the children were registered in the district of Brighton¹⁶. The 1861 Assessment Roll lists John Thomas Eddington as owner and occupier of “house and land, 80 acres” at Bagdad. This was the original Eddington grant together with the Piper grant, now called ‘Sunnyside’.

Perusal of the Valuation Rolls and other evidence demonstrates that Eddington’s Cottage was leased out at least as far back as 1870. The Valuation Roll of 1870 reveals that at that time a John Knighton rented from Eddington a “house and land under 1 acre”¹⁷. Comparison of the various entries for Eddington strongly suggest that this is the house now known as Eddington’s Cottage.

The valuation rolls also show that by 1875 the cottage was in the possession of John Sattler and being used as a store. In that year two local youths were charged with “breaking and entering the store of John Sattler of Upper Bagdadand feloniously stealing therefrom groceries and soft goods”¹⁸. The 1880 Valuation Roll shows the cottage (“cottage and garden”) being leased by John Sattler¹⁹. The 1903 Valuation Roll lists Sattler as leasing a “house, shop and garden” from Eddington; comparison with other entries for Eddington demonstrate that this is Eddington’s Cottage.²⁰

John Sattler was a shopkeeper from Hessen in Germany, born in 1839. He emigrated to Tasmania in 1855²¹ and in 1866 married Mary Ann Williams at Brighton. As noted above, by 1875 he had a shop in ‘Upper Bagdad’ and was definitely renting Eddington’s Cottage from at least 1880 onwards. The Sattlers had a very large family (12 children), many of whom were born whilst the family lived at Eddington’s Cottage. John (Johann) Sattler also owned land in Green Valley; by 1904 Hall Lane was known locally as Sattlers Road²².

John Thomas Eddington died in 1904²³ leaving a portion of the Sunnyside estate including the homestead and orchard block as well as 11 acres including Eddington’s Cottage to his daughter Alice Eddington as a lifetime interest²⁴. John Sattler continued to lease the cottage at least until 1916, at which point he is listed as the occupier of Alice Eddington’s “house, shop and land ¾ acre” at Bagdad²⁵. He is not listed in the 1919 Roll, and the 1925 roll shows no separate tenant for Eddington’s Cottage²⁶.

¹⁴ LTO Mem 8/3564

¹⁵ LTO CT217/31 and CT251/137 and *the Mercury* 21 July 1926 p9

¹⁶ See TA RGD33/1/42 number 82; RGD 33/1/44 Number 70; RGD33/1/46 Number 59; RGD33/1/40 Number 73

¹⁷ *Hobart Town Gazette* 18 January 1870 p429

¹⁸ *Cornwall Chronicle* 17 September 1875 – note there is no guarantee that this was the same building used as a store

¹⁹ *Hobart Town Gazette* 9 March 1880 p271

²⁰ *Hobart Town Gazette* 1 September 1903 p1748

²¹ Accessed via Ancestry.com 23 April 2026 [Johann \(John\) Sattler](#)

²² TA AD960/1/26 Number 6585

²³ *The Mercury* 5 December 1904 p2

²⁴ TA AD960/1/26 Number 6585

²⁵ *Tasmanian Government Gazette* 11 January 1916 p59

²⁶ *Tasmanian Government Gazette* 19 January 1925 p166

In May 1927 Alice Eddington leased the 11 acres mentioned above (including Eddington's Cottage) to her brother Arthur Leslie Eddington for 20 pounds a year. The lease recites that "the Lessee has for some years past leased from the Lessor the land hereditaments and premises hereinafter described". The 11 acres included a trotting track which was to be maintained in good order by Arthur Leslie Eddington²⁷.

Alice Eddington died in 1943²⁸, leaving her father's estate to be wound up. Pursuant to the will of John Thomas Eddington, Eddington's Cottage was sold to Arthur Leslie Eddington for £642²⁹. The boundaries of this title match the current title.

Arthur Eddington leased the cottage for a number of years to the Hill family. In 1976 his son John Leslie Eddington subdivided part of the Sunnyside estate, selling the cottage to Trevor William Hill for \$2,600^F For many years the cottage was home to Lester Hill, and in 2025 was purchased by Southern Midlands Council.

²⁷ Land Titles Office the LIST Mem 17/4419

²⁸ *The Mercury* 10 March 1944 p3

²⁹ Lands Titles Office The LIST Mem 22/5320